~~All Manifestation is a Concept~~

It is a fact that is not generally recognized, a fact that is not easily acceptable even if it is realized intellectually. This fact is that an object is known as an object because, and only because, there is ~~an~~ a reaction of one or more senses of a sentient being to an outside stimulus, that is to say, a stimulus which appears to derive from sources external to the psychosomatic mechanism, the reagent apparatus. In other words, objects would not be known as objects if there were no reactions of the senses of sentient beings to a variety of outside stimuli — which means, of course, that apart from the reagent apparatus through which the objects are surmised, objects as such have no demonstrable existence.

The subject which cognizes the objects is itself an object to the other ~~objects~~ sentient objects. Thus the rather obvious fact is that all objects — each acting as subject of the other objects — are merely a surmise because the factual existence of neither the object nor the subject can be demonstrated. What this really means is that there is no acceptable evidence for the existence of a phenomenal world external to and other than the consciousness of sentient beings. To carry the point logically further, the external world would thus seem to be nothing other than the sentient beings who are the cognizers of this world. But the sentient beings themselves do not seem to have any independent external existence (either as subject or object) and must therefore be a concept ~~or~~ in the consciousness in which they are cognized.

It would thus appear that all

objects — as subject or object — including the sentient beings are nothing but consciousness!! Finally, consciousness itself has no demonstrable existence and must therefore be a conceptual assumption!!

The only conclusion to which we seem to have arrived logically is that consciousness must be regarded as the manifested aspect of the unmanifest — the ultimate concept to point towards ~~define~~ That which by definition is inconceivable. Beyond that we cannot go because conceptuality cannot arise out of conceptuality but only out of ~~non~~ what is non-conceptual, because what is conceived as being objectively present can only arise from what is objectively absent, manifestation from what is unmanifest — because just as an eye cannot see itself as an object, conceptuality cannot conceive or objectify itself. In other words, consciousness (~~o~~ in which conceptuality arises) is pure non-conceptuality, not tainted either by the conceptual or the non-conceptual, which is an absolute absence of both positive and ~~neg~~ negative conceptuality, ~~or objectivization~~ which in turn ~~implies~~ inevitably implies absolute absence of name and form, and therefore of being or existing as an object, ~~the~~ — the ultimate absence from which appears all presence.

It is essential to understand that consciousness does not project the phenomenal universe — it is the phenomenal ~~o~~ universe, manifested as its objective self:

"I" do not exist objectively, but the phenomenally objectivized universe is "my" self.

Apart from pure consciousness, nothing exists independently — neither the senses nor the mind, nor their objects. It is consciousness alone which appears as the senses within an individual and the various objects without, and, as the subtle body ~~(puryashtaka)~~, reflects the objects outside.

The pure consciousness that is infinite and eternal, is ever free ~~of~~ from all modifications. In Vedantic terms the ~~The~~ jiva, the individual, is merely a notion that arises simultaneously and spontaneously along with the notion I Am, and it is this notional personal consciousness that lives and moves and believes itself as the individual entity. With the arising of the I-am-ness, consciousness is known as the ego (ahamkāra); with the arising of thoughts (manana) it is known as mind (manas); with the arising of awareness (bodha), it is known as intelligence (buddhi). All in all ~~the~~ nothing exists as such except consciousness in its various aspects — the body and the senses, the objects outside. It is through the incredibly ~~rapid~~ quick repetitions of these notions that the personal consciousness as the subtle personality condenses itself into apparently material solidity or substantiality. The same consciousness thereafter has identified itself with each individual object in separation. When this self-delusion disappears, the consciousness becomes aware of its universality and infinity.

All the bodies (puryashtaka) arise in consciousness as images — whether it is an object as near as a chair or as distant as a star — precisely as the manifestation of the entire universe (the first or original puryashtaka) arose in the ~~in~~ infinite consciousness. The jiva (individual) sees as objects whatever it conceives while still in the womb. Just as the cosmic elements evolve in the macrocosm, in a similar ~~manner~~

manner, the corresponding senses evolve in the microcosm, though, of course, it must be constantly borne in mind, while trying to understand the process of manifestation, that nothing has actually been "created", and that all that appears is mind-stuff of which all dreams are made. When the illusion of mirage is understood, the notion of the water in the mirage automatically vanishes although the water was necessary to explain the illusion. Only the Self or Consciousness is all that exists all the time. Everything else, the jiva, the puryashtaka (the subtle body) and all the rest of the notions (which was necessary to explain the illusion of manifestation) vanishes when the entire subject is clearly apperceived — the enquiry into the nature of the several notions, including the individual jiva, was indeed the enquiry into their unreality.

Consciousness identifies itself with each object, assumes the nature of the individual and experiences what it thinks as living. Knowledge is inherent in consciousness — indeed, they are the same precisely as space and void are identical. But, in its identification with the individual jiva, knowledge gets divided into subject/object relationship so that the multitude of objects get notionally limited by space and time because of the notional division as consciousness/knowledge, consciousness/mind, subject/object. But subjective knowledge, pure knowledge, is the very essence of consciousness and to that it always returns. When the false is seen as false, the real is always there.

The fictitious movement of energy in consciousness is what the "mind" is, and the expressions of the mind (like the hissing of the snake or the growl and roar of a tiger) are known as ~~the expressions~~ thoughts or ideas. Consciousness plus conceptualization is thought while consciousness minus conceptualization is our true nature, what-we-are. Consciousness plus ~~thou~~ conceptualization gives rise to the dualism "me" and "not-me", ~~bec~~ and there cannot be any conceptualization without the "me" which is the very basis of conceptualization. It is conceptualization which limits the universal consciousness into a personal consciousness or the mind, or the ego. This is how the ego arises, and the very understanding in depth of the apparent difference between the universal consciousness which is what-we-are, and the personal consciousness which is what-we-appear-to-be, ~~brings~~ starts the process of reversing back and inwards to our true nature. ~~in~~ The apperception of our true nature stops the outward flow of thought based on the conceptual welfare of the conceptual "me", and leads to the phenomenon known as ~~sudden~~ enlightenment, — and this happens suddenly, spontaneously and effortlessly.

As long as certain associated notions persist, the correlated assumption of bondage — and the pain and sorrow associated with that assumption must continue to plague the supposed individual. What are these notions? The human being is not "something that is" so far as it is a phenomenon. As a phenomenon, as an appearance in someone's consciousness, the human being is only "something that seems to be".

The whole point of bondage is that

that which cognizes an appearance wrongly assumes that it is the subject of that cognition and that, as such, it is an entity separate from that which is cognized. The fact of the matter, however, is that that which cognizes and that which is cognized are both appearances in each other's consciousness. Indeed, every conceivable thing that our senses perceive and our mind cognizes (through the interpretation of what is perceived by the senses) cannot be anything other than an appearance in consciousness, objectified and interpreted as an event in space-time.

What is to be understood is that both the assumptions, and the bondage based on those assumptions are merely phenomenal and therefore only apparent. Such understanding at once demolishes the psychological elements of a purely psychological bondage, and thereafter what remains is merely the psychological conditioning brought about by that apparent bondage. This conditioning will be wiped out by a de-conditioning process consisting of replacing the concept of "reality" by the ~~concep~~ concept of "appearance". Such a de-conditioning process —
35/ dissolving as it does that which was misconstrued as "real" and "separate" — must necessarily dissolve the spurious cognizing entity, and both are then seen as appearances in consciousness obviously without any independence or autonomy.

There is truly no diversity as such in creation; the diversity is merely an appearance in consciousness, according to the notions that appear in the particular personal consciousness, during evolution or involution. Many of the notions intermingle and thus through permutations and combinations an infinite variety is produced in this diversity, but the diversity appears only in the one infinite universal consciousness.

Each individual, in the personal consciousness, sees only those images which are reflected in his own mind. When the objectified images do not bring about the volitional expectations, new births and lives take place in the horizontal succession of temporality, appropriate to the psychological expectations. It is this mnemonic connection that creates the belief in birth and death, and rebirth. Evolution brings about a succession of "lives" in a progress towards the ultimate phenomenon known as enlightenment, when no mnemonic expectations remain unfulfilled and no new volitional expectations are created. But in this process of evolution, beginning from a sense of dissatisfaction with material and sensorial ~~satisfac~~ pleasures, then passing through dispassion on towards self-enquiry, and culminating in the total abdication and surrender of volition and identification that ultimately means enlightenment, — no individual entity is involved. It is not an individual entity that is born and reborn. All that happens is a gradual progress through several lives — not of any particular entity — towards the ultimate disidentification of the universal consciousness which had identified itself with a particular physical form, as personal consciousness, or mind.

Bondage for the supposed individual appears because of ~~a~~ the mistaken identity. What we are is the animating consciousness as such, — which is noumenon; ~~as~~ what we think we are ~~— and are not~~ is the phenomenal object to which the animating consciousness ~~gives~~ provides sentience. The only "existence" any phenomenal object, including the human being, can have is merely apparent, that is to say, that it is only an appearance in consciousness, an objectivization that is entirely dependent for its existence on the mind that objectivizes it. In other words, the existence of the phenomenal object, with mind as its only nature (~~as~~ like any dreamed character), ~~can have~~ cannot possibly have any independent nature of its own.

This mistaken identity of a separate "me" arises when the impersonal consciousness (or "mind") ~~so~~ comes into manifestation by objectifying itself as subject and object, and at ~~once~~ once becomes identified with each object. In this process of personalizing consciousness and thinking of it as "me", we thereby make the one and only Subject ("I") into an object. "I" is the direct expression of subjectivity, totally devoid of the essentially objective "me". This objectivizing of the pure subjectivity of "I" ~~into~~ and ~~calling it~~ understanding it as "me" is precisely what constitutes "bondage". In fact ~~it~~ this conceptual "me" is itself the ~~bonda~~ supposed bondage from which "liberation" is sought.

It is ignorance which makes the body and its movements seem different from, and independent of the mind, ~~or~~ (consciousness), but actually it is the mind which creates within itself the appearance of the body like the potter creates the pot out of wet clay.

The mind gets involved in the phenomenal manifestation, its own creation, by entertaining notions such as "I am ~~un~~happy" or "I am miserable". The consciousness (of which mind is the content) regains its universality when there is realization of the falseness or illusoriness of all that is sensorially perceptible — and then peace and equanimity prevail.

51/ It is the absolute Brahman, the universal consciousness alone that is. ~~The~~ Consciousness is ~~a~~ like a vast ocean on the surface of which arise waves of different shapes and sizes. Like the sentient human being, if the waves could think, the small wave would think it is small, the big one that it is big, one would think it is warm, ~~the~~ another that it is cold, and the wave that is about to be broken up by the wind would think that it is being destroyed! Waves are mere appearances on the surface of the ocean, all is really water.

The silkworm itself weaves its cocoon and then binds itself within. The universal consciousness creates the millions of sentient beings as part of the total manifestation, and then binds itself within each form by identification as a separate being. In fact there is neither bondage nor liberation. There is only the infinite universal consciousness which by identification, considers itself bound, and then, by disidentifying itself through self-enquiry, considers itself liberated — a sort of hide and seek ~~gage~~ game with itself.

The question of "bondage" and "freedom" can arise only so long as the true nature of the "individual" has not been well and truly understood. As soon as there is a clear realization of the fundamental fact that the individual — indeed, the total multitude of all individuals and sentient creatures — is the manifest appearance of the unmanifest, the phenomenal objective expression of the "I" subject without the slightest touch of the objective "me", the question of bondage cannot arise. The question cannot arise for the simple reason that the questioner does not truly exist except as an appearance in consciousness.

Whatever the mechanism of phenomenality — apparent causality or the more scientifically acceptable system of statistical probability — the fact remains that the individual, as such, is merely an appearance in consciousness, a psyche-soma obviously incapable of exercising freedom of any kind.

38/ That which thinks it is in bondage is that which thinks it is a psyche-soma subject to causality. Phenomenally in a psyche-soma there is no "ens" to have ~~free~~ any kind of freedom. But that which thinks it is in bondage, or free, is identified in thought with a phenomenal object and appears to be subject to either bondage or freedom. This leads us to the ineluctable conclusion that "he" (the psyche-soma which thinks itself as a separate entity) who thinks he is free is as much in bondage as "he" who considers himself bound.

To that subjective "being" of which all phenomenal manifestation is an appearance, no concept at all can apply, because all concepts are the product of duality.

The relationship between consciousness and the body is purely conceptual. The phenomenal world, including the body, ~~has been~~ may be said to have been fancied into creation by ~~the~~ consciousness precisely as a dream world is created ~~b~~ during sleep. The illusory entity ~~— the jiva —~~ gets objectified when consciousness uses its own creative energy to bring into conceptual existence the multitude of "me"s by identifying itself with — and thus limiting itself to — each of ~~those~~ the bodies so created.

Truly, neither the body nor the consciousness undergoes any experience either of pleasure or of pain. It is only the ignorant mind that suffers, and the mind is the content of consciousness. It is only in the condition of sleep ~~that the~~ that ~~waking~~ dreams arise (not the condition of deep sleep) and dreams disappear when the waking condition arises. It is only in ignorance that the mind dreams of world ~~of~~ appearance; when the ignorance disappears through the awakening of knowledge — when the light of knowledge dispels the darkness of ignorance — the world appearance (and ~~that~~ all it contains) is seen as the illusion that it is. So, what suffers the experience of pleasure and misery is neither the body nor the universal consciousness, but that which is known by various names such as personal consciousness, mind, ego, ignorance, mental conditioning etc.

39/ Our unhappiness and suffering — our supposed "bondage" is entirely the effect of the identification of what we are — the animating consciousness — with the subject or perceiver-cognizer element in our

division into subject and object, perceiver and perceived. This identification leads to the conceptual creation of that subject element into a supposedly independent and autonomous individual entity who can exercise personal volition in choice, decision and action.

The fact, however, remains that the subject element and the object element are interdependent and mutually inseparable in mind. The two together constitute the functioning of the event and clearly neither could have any sort of personal volition or autonomy in any circumstances.

It is this illusory identification leading to an illusory entitification which is the cause of all the supposed bondage. What we are — consciousness at rest, or whole-mind, or noumenon — can have no existence as such. We can exist only as objective manifestation of the totality of phenomena. We — as the subjective noumenon — cannot, in other words, have any objective existence and therefore cannot be subject either to constraint or to liberation therefrom. Our "bondage" and the associated misery and suffering can have only a conceptual ~~b~~ and illusory basis.

When the cosmic mind — the universal consciousness — manifested itself as the universe, the characteristic tendencies of each sentient being simultaneously came into existence, and the embodied jiva was "born" with its own dharma or natural characteristics. There is no difference between thought and action. Action is essentially the movement of energy in consciousness and becomes the cause of the inevitable effect in the inexorable law of causality. When such action comes to an end, conceptualization too ceases, and in the absence of conceptualization ~~action~~ there is no action. This is clearly seen in the case of the liberated sages.

40 / The sole reality is the ~~universal~~ infinite consciousness, and everything else is a concept beginning with the primal thought or concept I AM, by which consciousness viewed itself as the object of perception in the duality of subject and object (and all the innumerable pairs of interrelated opposites).

Pure movement in consciousness is karma or action untainted by individual or personal volition. When such action is pursued because of mnemonic impressions of past pleasures, it leads to the supposed bondage.

The impure mind, tainted by the dualism of "me" and the "not-me" pollutes all relationships and creates suspicion and enmity all around. The same event that is experienced by ~~[illegible]~~ several people is interpreted in different ways according to the state of the mind. In fact what a man thinks he is is nothing but the mind itself. Indeed, it is the mind creating objects within itself that is able to turn consciousness away from its true nature and

make it identify itself with the body. It is mind which appears as wind that moves the leaves on the trees, as the solidity of the earth, the void in the sky, the luminosity in the luminous.

The senses are born of the mind. It is not that the mind and thoughts arise because of the senses. If "the mind is elsewhere", one is unaware of what is right in front, one is unaware of the taste of what is being eaten, one is even unaware of the pain until it reaches a degree that brings the ~~s~~ mind back. And That which is able to apperceive this and understand this must necessarily be different in nature to what is perceived.

It is the wanting to "become", the wanting of change from what is, that is the cause of the supposed sorrow. The self or consciousness is totally different from the body-mind like the lotus and the water. So long as the inert body-mind continues to pursue the illusory pleasure, so long will the darkness of illusion continue, but as soon as the mind turns inward towards the light of awakening, the darkness of ignorance disappears at once. It appears as if the sky is polluted by dust, but the sky is not affected by the particles of dust floating about. Pleasure and pain appear to be experienced by "oneself", but they affect neither the body nor the self which transcends everything while being immanent therein.

The phenomenal manifestation is but the reflection of the unmanifest within itself, they are non-dual. Therefore there is no sorrow, no delusion; no creation, no destruction; no birth, no death. Whatever is is. What is to be done? Nothing. Then what happens? "You", then, are free of the dualism of "me" and "not me"; you are at peace within, without any sorrow or doubt in the mind; you remain firmly established in the inner silence, without any concern for your welfare, content with whatever comes along; you live effortlessly, without either wanting anything or giving up anything. This is brought about by the firm apprehension that everything happens in consciousness without any effort by any supposed individual entity, precisely as a crystal reflects the objects around it without any intention. A flight of birds is reflected in the water of the lake below — the birds do not intend to have their reflection, nor does the water intend to reflect the flight of the birds.

When the apperception of Truth occurs,

it is realized that whatever comes one's way unsought must be wholeheartedly accepted and enjoyed; nothing need be abandoned or rejected or given up because even such renunciation would ~~not~~ be ~~not~~ volitional. It is realized that while there is nothing to work for, it does not ~~mean~~ require any deliberate inaction, because deliberate ~~ion~~ action and inaction are identical. ~~All that would happens is~~ ~~All there should be is the~~ ~~that~~ When the mind ~~ceases~~ ceases to entertain any notion of doership or non-doership, ~~then~~ all action becomes non-action.

It is the inevitable, the unknown beyond their supposed control and beyond the events of natural order, which people generally imply and mean (knowingly or unknowingly) when they speak of God or Divinity, and pray for the acceptable to happen and the unacceptable not to happen. Some others refer to God or divine grace as whatever that brings about equanimity and the cessation of the fleeting joy and sorrow.

In actual fact the supposed individual functions in this world strictly according to the providential dictates of the natural order or niyati or prajnya, as the wind moves in space, although the individual may consider ~~the~~ his actions as ~~his~~ volitional actions based on his personal choice and decision. The movement of plants and trees along a mountain slope makes it appear as if it is the peak that is swaying; similarly, it is because of the prompting of nature that the supposed individual acts or refrains from acting, not out of his supposed volition as an autonomous and independent entity. All such action~~s~~ — or lack of action — is wholly within the totality of functioning in manifestation, and is nothing but a movement in consciousness.

So long as there is conceptualization, there is ~~neither~~ the individual and God, and whatever else is objectivized in the mind. When mind is vacant and conceptualization has ceased, there is no one to be concerned with anything. Why should there be any fear or worry about the conceptual void? Who is to be afraid — of what?

Bondage, to which the individual considers himself subject to, in the final analysis, is nothing but attachment to an illusory volition, attachment

to a supposed "will" which is to be translated as the exercise of an independent, personal choice of decision and action by that illusory entity with which what-one-is is identified and which is called "me".

43) What this means in effect is that the pronoun "I" is used quite incorrectly. "I" is, basically and fundamentally, the eternal subject without the slightest touch of objectivity, but the pronoun is used for a phenomenal objectivization as if it were perfectly free to do whatever it wished, whenever and wherever it so wished. But the simple and incontrovertible fact is that an objectivization, like any other piece of mechanism (and the supposed individual is nothing but a psycho-somatic mechanism), can do nothing of itself.

What has in fact happened is that the driver of a motor car has identified himself with the car, and thereafter considers the car as "me". This assumed personality of the "me-mechanism" is obviously a concept, factually inexistent. This is what causes conflict, suffering and bondage — the supposed need to function volitionally as against the deepest intuitive conviction that the entity (supposed to exercise this volition) does not — can not — exist.

When the incongruity of this situation is firmly understood, the illusion of a suffering entity in bondage at once disappears. "I" returns to its original subjectivity when the eclipse of the "me" disappears. What lives — or, more correctly, "is lived" — sensorially is the object and ~~of~~ what-I-am is its sentience. What-I-am expresses itself as phenomenal functioning — seeing, hearing, ~~tasting~~ taste-ing etc. — but there is no objective "I" (the "me" is ~~an~~ a fiction) that sees, hears, tastes etc. Only the object suffers and "I" am not an object.

The infinite consciousness is all there is, and there is no relationship between mind and consciousness except like fragrance to the flower. The senses are inert and insentient, and merely act as channels through which mind flows out to reach objective experiences. The eyes see objects but the notions of the experience being pleasant or otherwise arise not in the eyes but in the mind. Thus the sense functions themselves are innocent; of course, without them the functioning as such — seeing, smelling, tasting, touching, hearing — could not have taken place. If the mind keeps itself aloof from the sense functions which are natural to them, there would be no suffering because it is this illusory relationship between mind and senses which produces notions, like lust and anger, that lead to unhappiness and bondage.

It is only ignorance which brings about a false sense of cause and effect between senses and their objects, the experiences and the illusory experiencer, actions and their illusory do-er. Where does the error lie, how does it arise, and whose is the error? The sequence actually is something like this: trees grow, and provide timber, pieces of timber are tied together by ropes made of other fibres, the blacksmith fashions the axe which the carpenter uses to build a house — and he builds the house not to live in, but to earn a livelihood! In other words, events in this world happen independently of one another, and their connection with one another, as cause and effect, is illusory or accidental, like the classic instance of the ripe coconut falling "because of" the alighting of a crow on the branch. Can anyone be blamed? When apperception happens, error remains

an error by itself, knowledge becomes knowledge, the real is seen ~~an~~ as real and the unreal as unreal, what has been destroyed is destroyed, and what remains, remains. There is no need of any searching for cause and effect, ~~to~~ no question of guilt or achievement.

When understanding dawns, conceptualization ceases and mind becomes vacant. The very nature of the mind is ignorance and therefore stupidity. ~~and therefore~~, When mind stops working or conceptualization ceases, peace or wisdom prevails; ~~because when~~ no thought of either happiness or unhappiness diverts the equanimity ~~(because~~ of the pure mind.

Experience and Awareness

"Experience" is what is experienced on reacting to an outside stimulus or to an event. It is not factual but conceptual. 45/ It is this fact that is very often ignored: that experience as such has no existence. ~~If for~~ The reaction is sensually interpreted as pleasant or unpleasant, and such reaction will vary from person to person, and even for the same person, the reaction will depend on the circumstances. Indeed, if for some reason there is no reaction, there will be no experience at all.

Together with the fact that experience is conceptual and not factual, the other basic fact is that in the absence of the "me" there cannot be any experience, any cognizance. And vice versa there must be an experience whenever there seems to be an awareness of "me". In other words, both the "experience" and the "me" are conceptual and there cannot be one without the other, and of course being conceptual, an experience is always in the context of "time". In the present moment, NOW, when there is no ~~stringing~~ horizontal stringing-together of the consecutive moments into duration, there is neither the "me" nor the "experience".

It is essential to distinguish between an experience and experience-ing as such. A "self" or "me" who considers itself autonomous, and "lives" and "dies" is a part of ~~the~~ the temporal phantasy ~~which is~~ in which there are the see-er, thinker, do-er, and, the things seen (or sensorially perceived), thoughts and deeds. These "entities" are merely figurants in the temporal phantasy, ~~but~~ but the functioning as such that is implied — the doing as distinguished from the do-er and the deed — is not a conceptual interpretation of a percept but perceive-ING as such, which is the subjective aspect of what-we-are. Therefore, "think-ING" and "feel-ING", not

interpreted as thought and emotion by a "me", are still non-objective and impersonal, and thus (not being apparently experienced by an experiencer) are the experience-ING which is all that "we" can be: the "within" that is the source of all function-ING, the immutable background of the phenomenal process of "living", when not subjected to sequential duration. Experience of the "me" — positive or negative — is in duration interpreted as thought and emotion, pleasure/pain, love/hate.

46

Why is this so? This is so because for experience to be individualized there has to be an individual phenomenal object, which is why a philosopher like Schrodinger could say that consciousness is a singular of which the plural is unknown. But a mystic like Nisargadatta Maharaj would insist that consciousness is not a "singular" either. In other words, we cannot exist as conscious and rational entities, nor can we not-exist, because absence of positive existence comports also absence of its interrelated counterpart. What-we-are is the experience-ing but not the experience that is experienced by a "me" that is conceived as pleasure or pain.

What-we-are, what-I-am, cannot be conscious or aware because it IS consciousness or awareness, and it is impossible to be conscious of what is being conscious, to be aware of what is being aware. If I am aware of what I am, then what I am is the object of a subject that is aware of an object — and would thus be an object of which a subject is aware, and so on in a perpetual regression. What can be conscious or aware is a divided-mind which can reason but cannot apperceive its own wholeness. But then, if there were only one man in the world, would he need to know he was a "man" — does light need to know that it is light?!

← <u>What does Truth Imply in Practice?</u>

It is perfectly axiomatic — but rarely accepted as a fact — that there cannot be any factuality as an entity, ~~that~~ (because no object has any self-nature or "own-being") and that therefore we ourselves cannot exist at all as such.

A sentient being is merely an image in mind, an appearance perceived and conceived by the "subject" of each such objectification. It is not "we" who do the perceiving and conceiving, for there ~~#~~ is no "we". "We" and "they" are perceived, conceived and interpreted through or via one another.47/ This clearly means that there has to be a single source of perceiving which perceives ~~(?)~~ through the multiple instruments of perceiving which are "ourselves" ~~(?)~~. Each such instrument or percept ~~being~~ is conceived as an apparent entity, but really has no kind of personal existence of its own.

If this fact is squarely faced, ~~it~~ the conclusion is ineluctable that objectively we cannot be anything but what is perceived, conceived and interpreted through other sentient beings. ~~#~~ The interpretation of the phenomenal objects that we are, ~~is~~ will depend on whether it is done ~~done by friends will vary~~ by our "friends" or "foes" or by "ourselves". The fact, however, remains that we are totally devoid of objective existence and that what we are in life is merely an appearance in mind or consciousness without any fixed identity, quality or attributes.

It is important to note that subjectively also we are totally devoid of identity, quality or attributes, representing phenomenally that noumenal subjective "I", the source of all phenomenality and manifestation.

The significant point that arises at this stage is: if, as ourselves, we are nothing whatever,

if we do not exist at all as autonomous entities, for whom is all this being said? The answer is, as Nisargadatta Maharaj repeated used to asseverate, it is universal consciousness speaking to the identified consciousness. The understanding as such can never be at a personal level. When the understanding happens as such without any comprehender, there is a clear indication of what we ARE through understanding what-we-are-not. The fact remains that we are <u>apparent</u> entities living our lives, but the apperception of truth brings about a recognition of the dual nature of living in this world which is based on relativity. And this recognition is what is required, the recognition that while our phenomenal limitation as an autonomous, separate entity, is illusory <u>as limitation</u>, our phenomenality as such is not illusory because it is inherent in our noumenality, whose objective expression it is. In other words, we recognize the dual character of our "living" which is based on relativity, the comparison of ~~opposite~~ opposing concepts. Thereafter, we live <u>as if</u> the world were real, as in a Punch and Judy show, as in a drama, as in a dream — merely witnessing the show.

It is for this reason that Maharaj used to say so often that understanding is all. A clear understanding, ~~with conviction~~, an apperception, comports the conviction that, as mere appearances we cannot possibly have any volition concerning choice or action. What then happens? What then happens is that "we" flow with the tide, and all that remains is the flow of noumenal witnessing (without any phenomenal witnesser), the subjective element in our "living". Then the living dream is dreamed in ~~peace~~ equanimity to its very end.

The Nature of Existence

What does one really mean by "existence"? Unless we clearly understand what we mean when we use a particular word, considerable avoidable confusion would arise. It is a common experience that in discussions indefinite locutions are used which have an affective implication which necessitates a volitional discrimination between pairs of mutually contradictory concepts. If this fact is firmly kept in mind, most of the infructuous discussions would be avoided.

"Existence", for instance, can have any meaning only relatively to "non-existence" because "existence" is a conceptual objectivization of some object that is, or appears to BE. Other than that, in the abstract (not objectively applied) it has no meaning. If this were not so — if "existence" were not intended to mean specifically "appears to have being" — it would imply that there was no difference between object and its appearance. But that would be an obvious contradiction in terms for "appears to be or exist" would bring in its opposite "does not appear to be or exist", and this would need potential non-apparent existence!

Therefore existence as such cannot be indicated by "apparent existence". Existence and its relative opposite "non-existence" must necessarily remain objective concepts or conceptual objects, that is to say, objects in mind. The inevitable corollary of this fact is that only what is objective exists and that what is not objective cannot exist. In other words, only objectivity can exist, and subjectivity cannot.

49/ The significance of this analysis is that both existence and non-existence — both positive

and negative existence — are conceptual modes of existence, and it is the absence of both, the absence of conceptualizing itself that is the inseeing, that is the truth. In other words, any kind of existence being conceptual and therefore phenomenal, only their absence through mutual annihilation is noumenal presence. For the whole-mind to function as totality, the split-mind must vacate and be in abeyance. And then such ~~pure~~ whole-mind functioning is phenomenally negative functioning and cannot therefore be revealed through dualistic thought or verbal expression.

Similarly, "living" as existence is a spatial illusion, while "dying" as non-existence is a temporal illusion. What-we-think-we-are is a spatio-temporal illusion, in a "living" based on the serializing of the three-dimensional "stills" or "quanta", perceived and cognized as a movement only so long as the light of consciousness is available. When the light of consciousness gets ~~is~~ shut off, we ~~are~~ no longer "exist" because we are no longer elaborated in space and extended in duration, and this is known as "dying". It is ~~in~~ the apperception of the space-time ~~as~~ mechanism as purely conceptual — the noumenal understanding — which ~~reveals~~ comports the annihilation of all conceptualizing and thus reveals the truth of what-we-are. How could there possibly be such objects as "we"? As what-we-are, we have never lived and we cannot die.

It is for this reason that the Masters have always declared that we neither exist nor not exist. Existence — positive or negative — can only be in duration. What we ARE is INTEMPORALITY.

← Our Relation to Time

Consciousness cannot be conceptualized without splitting the wholeness or unicity into duality, which is designated by a variety of interdependent counterparts, for instance the traditional and religious terms like heaven and earth and the more modern and philosophical terms like noumenon and phenomena. A pair of metaphysical terms — intemporality and temporality — would be neither inaccurate nor inappropriate. What we ARE is intemporal; what we think we are (what we appear to be) with which we unfortunately identify ourselves, is temporal. In our phenomenal objective aspect, what we think we are is "time"; while in our subjective aspect on the basis of consciousness and sentience, we are "timeless".

Phenomenally, we are "time" because what we think we are — the psychosomatic apparatus — is something in action, in duration, whether the "doing" is physical or psychic, action or thought. An apparent volitional act and the relative volitional reaction, both constitute the infamous karma. Obviously, each such apparent action contributes to the composite structure of events which denotes our life in the phenomenal world. The point to note is that this movement in duration does not in any way make us entities separate from some "thing" called "time". All it means is that it leaves us precisely as what time is!

Whether envisaged as a straight line or a curve, "time" has often been compared to a river. Indeed, the simile, one might say, is almost intuitive and instinctive. It does not need any special kind of wisdom to understand that, since we perceive this river of time as flowing, we must necessarily be

outside "time" because, if we were in the river, we could not be aware of the flow. Since we perceive the flow of time, we are obviously experiencing it from "outside time" which can only denote intemporality. What flows in the stream of life, the river of time, only things phenomenal and perceived by our senses (including our bodies), can only be temporal. What we ARE must necessarily be intemporal, immutable.

It would thus be clear that "time" and "phenomena" are conceptual objectivizations, (including our own appearance with which we are erroneously identified). It would further mean that as phenomena we are "time" — flowing from waking state to sleeping state, from birth to death, from presence to absence, from appearance to disappearance, from apparent integration to apparent disintegration like any "thing." Time and its interdependent counterpart, intemporality, are separate or polarized opposites only when they are so phenomenally conceived. Noumenally, in their mutual negation in non-phenomenality, they remain inseparably united. In whole mind, when the split mind of phenomenal conceptualization is absent, they are reintegrated as wholeness, neither temporality nor intemporality

It is for this reason that, intemporally, what-we-ARE can be described as "I AM NOW, HERE." "NOW" is the verticle, eternal, present moment ("time" being the horizontal flow). "HERE" is the eternal infinity (not the temporal "there"). It is in this sense that the Masters' constant advice is: JUST BE.

The Cosmos and I

We are the sentient beings in the world, and what we are is "I". The cosmos has no ~~other~~ nature other than what we ARE. This is the basic, simple fact of the matter.

There is nothing religious or sanctified about what we are. As sentient objects, we are still objects, though with sentience. All objects are ~~made~~ composed of the three directions of measurement, plus duration (by means of which they are perceptible in their form). The measurements, which constitute form, are also its perceiving, and thus the perceiving becomes identical with that which is perceived, with the result that apart from perceiving itself there remains no room for a perceiver as such. ~~Two~~ The forms perceive one another and perceived form is itself perceiver, perceiving and perceived.

It is important to understand that things become apparent, they do not exist as "things", and their perceiver is (?) all that they are. Again, there is thus no room for a projector of form, because the imagined projector is the perceiver and there is no thing to be projected. The only "event" is a perceiving of form, and such perceiving is the absolute totality of the event — its origin, its constitution, its appearance: the perceived is its perceiving. In other words, the supposed "event" is just its perceiving, which is its manifestation ~~as~~ in its dimensional composition. What this means simply is that there is no place either for subject or for object, only a sensorial perceiving which is an aspect of the noumenality that is all that it is.

What we are is not separate from what we perceive, objects are not separate from subject, phenomena are not separate from noumenon,

and nothing phenomenal is separate from what noumenally we ARE, and that is utterly formless. As space-time figments we are infinity and intemporality. As concepts we are non-conceptuality.

Materials, characteristics, the "performance" of a "form" are all nothing but interpretive concepts in duration, based on memory (which could be interpreted as "habit-energy"). They are merely details of psychic elaborations that complete the phenomenal picture without adding any pertinent requirement. Similarly, all affective and intellectual manifestations (including the attribution by simple-minded pious people of concepts and emotions to a divinity) are also interpretive psychic elaborations, whose phenomenal _expression_ cannot ever be directly noumenal in origin.

Finally, conceptual negation can never be conceived. How can conceiving conceive that which is itself conceiving ?! It is what we ARE, neither any-thing nor no-thing. It is just "I", not even I-ness. We, as "I", are this infinite intemporality — "I AM (THIS) THAT I AM."

The final Truth is truly simple and obvious — "just in front of your eyes", as the Masters have said — precisely like the spectacles through which one looks without seeing them. The point is that "It" cannot be objectivized, and therefore what is needed for an "awakening" is a subjective displacement in order to BE IT.

The Light of my Eye

The light of my eye is "I" – the vocable "I" expressing itself through manifold manifestations, the innumerable "me"'s ~~att~~ appearing and disappearing every moment.

There is nothing in the Cosmos which light has not found except darkness. When light seeks out darkness, what it finds is the absence of light. The only finding is the understanding that what has been found was the absence of that which was seeking. Asking "who am I" is the light seeking the darkness of a "me", but finding that there is no "who" but perhaps a "what" – the absence of the presence of 'this which is asking the question and seeking the "who". Switch off the ~~search~~ searchlight ~~being~~ focussed on the outside object and you will at once see, not the subject (because it would simultaneously become an object), but the absence of what is looking.

Light shines – or appears to shine – only on meeting objective resistance. Light is present everywhere in space (even though the sky may appear to be dark) but is cognizable as such only when it appears to shine through objective reflection from particles in our conceptual atmosphere, when they are sensorially perceived. Any object seen or an event observed has its existence only because "we" have perceived the object or experienced the event, only because one of our senses has recorded the percept or event and has interpreted it in the duality of subject/object. The object or event does not have any independent existence other than our perceiving of it as an appearance in our consciousness.

It is most important to understand,

however, that all/[54] this appears to happen to us, and that is all we can know about it. All we can know about it is what "we ourselves" think about it. It has no knowable existence of its own, and to think of it as being something particular (irrespective of its being an appearance in our psyche) independently of our cognizing of it, is absurd.

The light of my eye which perceives is "I" because there can be no light other than our light, and since whatever we are must necessarily be reduced to the vocable "I" (whoever says it and "anyone" may say it), "I" must be light. I, as light, manifest only when I encounter the apparent resistance of phenomenal objectivity, and thereby I shine because shining is the apparent nature or Dharma of light. When all apparent objects are removed — when consciousness ceases to function in deep sleep or under sedation — all objects and ~~the~~ "I" remain in the potentiality of the static aspect of consciousness which is the not-shining of light or the apparent darkness of space, consciousness in the absence of movement.

It is what I am that does the seeing, it is the luminosity of the totality of functioning — the vocable "I" — which produces the appearance of action and renders all action universal. The supposed individuals concerned in all ~~action~~ apparent action are merely phenomenal reflections like any other objects, and nothing more.

Liberation from Self

I may believe that the whole universe is a dream and that all the human beings and the other sentient beings are dreamed characters within that dream, but so long as the "I" is a self who considers himself as being outside that dream, I must necessarily be no nearer to the awakening from that dream. This is so because liberation as such is nothing other than the liberation from this idea of a self or "me". It is only when the "me" is included in the visionary universe, and the apperception does not include a "me" to apperceive as the apperceiver, that the "I" can occupy the position vacated by the "me". Then the apperception comports the realization that the seeker and the sought is the same.

The "self" as a phenomenon is merely an appearance like all phenomena, and therefore devoid of autonomous and independent nature, just as a shadow cannot have any such nature. As an entity "self" is only an erroneous concept. In other words, "I", as such, is totally absent in mere appearance, and "I" cannot be an object at all. Liberation from bondage is nothing other than being completely permeated by this understanding, and there cannot be liberation without the total annihilation of the notion of phenomenal identity as "self" or "me"

The simple truth is that no "me" can be liberated because there is no objective "me" that is under bondage. Simply, there is no "me" at all! Freedom can only be freedom from one's idea of oneself. The notion of one's "self" is one's only bondage. Indeed, any effort by a "self" to liberate "itself" would merely mean steadily strengthening the very obstacle it is

seeking to remove.

What is necessary is the abolition of the notion of a "self", the dis-appearance of the conceptual appearance which, one knows, is not what one IS. For this to happen, the way cannot possibly be either meditation (sitting thinking), or premeditation (sitting thinking of not-thinking), or unpremeditation (sitting not-thinking about not-thinking) because all these methods or processes must necessarily involve a "me" who is meditating or premeditating or unpremeditating, towards an end which seeks to abolish the notion of the very "me" who is doing it. Such processes or methods may indeed produce certain results (which may or may not be harmful) but never the one result that matters, the one that is sought. The answer lies only in a spontaneous "letting-go" of all desire and effort, a true surrender, which is itself the result of a deep understanding!

56/

The Child of a Barren Woman

The questions whether someone is ignorant or enlightened — in bondage or liberated —, whether someone is subject to destiny or freewill, are both ~~totally~~ utterly misconceived. Neither is a question at all because the premises on which the questions ~~is~~ are based are false, ~~inasmuch as~~: there just is no entity to be called "someone" to which either condition would be relevant either physically or metaphysically.

The fact of the matter is that the "someone" is merely a psyche-soma, a body-mind, that is quite incapable of exercising any kind of independence or autonomy. The psyche-soma is merely an appearance, a vision that is subject to one of the two ways in which the mechanism of phenomenality could be envisaged. Whether the process of manifestation is explained by a principle based on the notion of causality, or by one that is based on statistical probability, it really makes no difference because whatever the "principle" or "law" that is accepted to explain the mechanism of manifestation, the point is that all such laws are merely schematic conceptual structures. The point moreover, is that all the "someone"s are merely appearances ~~in~~ within the totality of manifestation and not as separate entities. No form of objectivization could possibly have any nature of its own, and the physicists now accept that the "observer" is a "factor" in whatever experiment they undertake.

If thus the nature of ~~the~~ a "someone" as a psyche-soma is clearly understood, then all problems would at once be seen to be problems concerning the "child of a barren woman" as Nisargadatta Maharaj used to say. In other words, whatever ~~thinks psyche-soma~~ thinks it is in bondage or is free,

, that it is determined or is exercising volition (free-will) is identified in thought with a phenomenal object and *appears* to be subject to the particular condition. That is to say, the "someone" who thinks he is ~~bound~~ free, whether as being enlightened or as having free-will, is as much in "bondage" as the "someone" who thinks he is bound, whether as being ignorant or as being determined.

57/ The ~~supposed~~ problem of the ~~supposed~~ phenomenal entity disappears entirely ~~if~~ it is seen that the noumenal aspect of any "one" is precisely the same as that of any other phenomenon, that is to say, noumenality itself. Any such problem is only apparent because the seeker of ~~for~~ the solution to the problem — whether it concerns bondage and liberation, or free-will and destiny — is still an apparent identity and no identity can ever find its own absence.

¶ A self-anchored phenomenon, that which thinks it is in bondage or free, determined or exercising free-will, is identified in thought — in conceptualizing — with a phenomenal object, and *appears* subject to that condition to which such thought is attached. Such a self-anchored phenomenon cannot find the noumenon that it really is any more than a shadow can find its substance; and, most importantly therefore, the exercise of volition by way of any kind of practice must necessarily be futile and defeat its own purpose.

← Nobody Believes that He does not Exist

When the disciple goes to the Guru wanting to know his real nature, the Guru tells him that the only thing he needs to know is that he does not exist as an entity. His astonishment turns into perplexity when he sees that the Guru is not making a joke but is intensely serious. It is perhaps much later that he would understand that nobody has ever believed that he does not exist. This is because there is no entity to believe that he does not exist. If there were an entity, such an entity, in maintaining that it did not exist, would automatically thereby prove its existence: the very saying of it would itself refute it.

What is present cannot say that it is absent. This is of course a truism. What is the point in stressing it? The point — perhaps the most important and the very basic point — is that ~~that which~~ the one who is seeking the answer is the absence of that which he is not. This means that there can be a "you" only so long as there is thinking as if by a phenomenal object, or an objective appearance, a "you" that thinks it is bound and seeks liberation. As soon as the thinking-process ceases (as in deep sleep or under sedation) there is no "you" either considering ~~it~~ that it is bound or seeking any liberation. This makes it clear that the ~~entity of a~~ "you" is purely an inferential entity who assumes that he is bound. In other words the "me" concept has no permanence as such, and its absences are as inevitable as its presences, both being recurrent and intermittent. But while the presences ~~as~~ are totally in temporality, the absences are intemporal; ~~the absences are intemporal~~; this is because while presence in duration means absence intemporally, temporal absence, being absence of presence, is also intemporal absence.

To put the matter differently, and perhaps more accurately, absence of identification with the "me" concept means the absence of a presence in duration, and therefore comports its intemporal absence also. It is thus totally outside the sphere of space-time continuum, before time ever was, and is therefore eternal.

To put it in yet another way, when subject is looking outside, subject sees object, and when subject itself is seen looking at its object, subject becomes object and is no longer subject. This is like the cameraman snapped in the act of snapping his object. When subject turns round and looks within at itself, what it sees is not subject (because then it would still be looking at an object) but "nothing" at all, because subject, as such cannot be seen, only objects can be seen. Subject as such is the absence of anything seen or seeable. This is the "mirror-void", which reveals everything but retains nothing. This is the absence of identification with a "me" concept. This is the transcendence of subject-object relationship, the total absense which is the presence of all that appears to be, the total absence from which arises the concept of presence of presence and presence of absence.

The Basic Logic of the Void

So long as we are employing thought, there is conceptualizing and our mind is split, and every such concept is subject to the interdependent opposites or counterparts. The question of the dual counterparts, of a perpetual regression (God created the world, but who created God, and so on) can cease only when the whole-mind is invoked. Thus, as soon as it is apperceived that total phenomenal absence means total noumenal presence, there is no more objectivizing through dual concepts, because ~~never can~~ as soon as it is understood that total phenomenal absence is the same as total noumenal presence (that they are ONE, and never can they be two), there cannot be any beyond. ~~The~~ Apperceiving means the transcending of the process of objectivizing and the return of functioning to the source, with the whole-mind functioning directly.

The phenomenal (appearance or form) and its interdependent opposite, the non-phenomenal (non-appearance or formlessness), are both conceptual. The source of the phenomenal and the non-phenomenal is "noumenon" which is not the interdependent counterpart of "phenomenon". Noumenon is thus a symbol indicating double phenomenal absense inasmuch as it is the absense of both counterparts (phenomenal and non-phenomenal). Even so, all this, it must be noted, is conceptual, and "noumenon" becomes an objective concept requiring a "cognizer" of something cognized.

The noumenon is thus conceived as non-being, a shapeless emptiness, the potential "void" out of which the myriad things are engendered. Thus the non-being or "void" in fact amounts to an attempt to objectify subjectivity. This fact must be very clearly seen and understood because otherwise one would for

60 ever be tempted to conceive it *objectively* whether as "inconceivable" nothingness or void, or as the mysterious source of all things. The very fact of trying to conceive it as an object — "inconceivable" though it is imagined — implies hanging on to the habitual way of ~~always~~ seeking to objectify every perception. And the heart of the matter is that unless this habit of turning every percept into an objective concept is abandoned, the essential understanding cannot even begin to develop.

Whatever is conceived as the "void" or nothingness cannot be an object at all, for it is what the perceiver of it is, and cannot be seen either to exist or not to exist, for it cannot be seen at all!

What really happens is that the perceiver at this juncture is trying to look at what he is himself after having reached a sort of dead-end. What should really happen now is that the perceiver should turn right round and wake up to the truth that he is face to face with his own nature, and that the void of the dead-end is precisely what the eye sees when it attempts to look at itself. Enlightenment happens when ~~they~~ it is apperceived that the notions of "non-existence" or "void" or "emptiness" are indeed futile and empty, because such notions are merely the indications or pointers that the end of the intellectual road has been reached. Apperception happens the moment the seeker turns round and finds that ~~they~~ he is already at the destination which is home: the seeker is himself what he has been seeking!

Saint Jnaneshwar, in his *Amritanubhava*, says that he got rid of the conceptual cognizer of the difference between the voidness of nullity and the voidness of the potential plenum by the grace of his Guru, by surrendering his conceptual individuality at the feet of his Guru and thereby annihilating it.

61/ ← The Substantial "I" and the shadowy "me"

"I" can never be conscious of anything. Why? Because "consciousness" as such is all that I AM. The notion of a separate entity, individual, self, ego or "me-concept" is an object. "I" become an object as soon as I think of my self, and whenever I act as my self, it is an object that acts. However, on rare occasions when I act directly, then no "I" acts. Why? Because I am the source of all thought and of all doing, not the thinker of the thought, nor the performer of any act.

What does this mean? This means that there is no cognizer independently of the object cognized, nor any object cognized independently of the cognizer of it. The "cognizer" and the "cognized" are not two but merely the counterparts of the act of cognition. Together they constitute the function of cognizing, the functional aspect of noumenality or pure potentiality which as such cannot have any phenomenal existence other than its manifestation as the interrelated objects, cognizer and cognized. The observer cannot observe the observer; the eye cannot see the eye that sees.

Where does this lead us? This leads us to realize the absurdity of phenomenal objects desperately seeking for themselves as subject. How could an object possibly seek and find its subject? All that an object thinks it is doing is done by the subject, all it is is subject. Therefore the seeking means the subject itself desperately seeking for itself! The shadow is nothing other than the substance. How can the shadow eliminate itself? Indeed, there is no "thing" to aim at, or hunt, or look for, as what one is. On ceasing to seek, one is present as PRESENCE, noumenal presence or phenomenal absence. The act of

searching is inevitably that which, by externalizing itself, turns itself away from what it is.

This of which one is conscious is an object, a thing. Everything is "I", and I am no thing. What I am objectively is the <u>totality</u> of phenomenal manifestation, the objectivization of subjectivity. What I am subjectively is what all phenomena ARE. Is there anything inherently personal about it at any stage? Never. Indeed, the intrusion of the personal element is the whole trouble, the infamous "bondage".

It is only when we know that we are not the inferential phenomenal object that we think we are, that we can recognize the immense potentiality that is our noumenal non-being. Non-being? Of course, because "being" is "becoming" since it has within itself the impregnated notion of duration.

63/

Book III

The Individual and his problem

← The Individual and Nature (Nisarga)

From the earliest possible time, the infant is conditioned to regard nature not as something of which he is an integral part — which his deepest instinct tells him to — but as something alien, to be conquered and exploited for his individual needs. This broad view (and purpose) gets suitably amended according to the changing scientific vogues and intellectual fashions, but the underlying estrangement has continued unabated until for some time now, the view has prevailed that the needs of man require that man himself should actively take over the management of the world, including its ecology; that the lazy way in which the evolution of life and nature has taken place over the last perhaps two million years can no longer be allowed; and that, difficult though the task may be, nature and life must be <u>controlled</u> by the individual man, and not allowed to take its normal, natural course. The few comparatively paltry achievements of science have blinded man to the inescapable fact that the subtle balance and harmony in the universe has been maintained through extraordinarily complex processes of nature of which man has but the haziest comprehension.

This situation has certain interesting aspects. Ever since Konrad Zuse developed in 1941 in Germany the first functioning computer, he foresaw the computer as helping man to unravel the deepest secrets of nature. And so it has been. In theoretical physics, even now it is hardly feasible to conduct significant experiments without using computers. In telecommunications, and even in the private sphere, the computer is clearly leading to important changes, and it is quite clear that technological development in general is bound to be greatly accelerated in the near future. Computers are becoming more compact and better equipped

with larger storage capacity. And the interesting aspect of the matter is that it is more than likely that in the next century, or perhaps earlier than later, certain types of factory plant will be developed by computers working on their own, at first partially and then totally. Already, today, computers are (65) involved to a large extent in the design of computer components, and are able to direct the subsequent manufacturing process almost without any human intervention. This advance could possibly make the working individual completely out of date, and indeed it is expected that systems could be created that could reproduce themselves. Could the state of things reach a stage where the computer would think that nature — including the human being — is a world to be conquered and controlled by technology and not something to be allowed to happen, to take its own unguided course? ~~In other words,~~ Could the computer in course of time take over from the human ~~being~~ intellect ~~who~~ which forgets that ~~his~~ its roots are in the very organism it now presumes to improve. The fact of the matter is that "the technical rational consciousness is as alien to the natural man as was the supernatural soul; for both alike, nature and the natural man is an object, studied always by a technique which makes it external and therefore different from the subjective observer." In other words, our ideas of what nature is like on the inside are merely concepts from outside, mere guesses at the mercy of educated fashion. Knowledge of nature from the inside can happen only through natural, spontaneous intuition. This is due to a split a schism between body and mind, spirit and nature, subject and object, controller and controlled, the polaric opposites

Greater scientific knowledge however, has made the ~~the~~ individual human realize that all these divisions are actually misleading terms ~~in which~~ referring to a world wherein all events are

clearly interdependent: "an immense complexity of subtly balanced relationships which, like an endless knot, has no loose end from which it can be untangled and put in supposed order". What this means in effect is that in this world of interdependent polaric relationships — of a seamless unity — nothing can have any meaningful existence except in terms of each other; and, therefore, it is quite impossible for man to consider this world as something outside of himself, something he can control from without, with his roots established outside the world which he is considering. Man and nature are one phenomenon, not two — just as, indeed, the phenomenon and the noumenon (whether considered in terms of non-phenomenon or in terms of that which is prior to both) are one, not two. All there is, is consciousness, whether it is at rest as the subjective unmanifest or it is in movement as the objective manifest. As Nisargadatta Maharaj used to point out repeatedly, a deep understanding, an apperception, of this unity is Truth, enlightenment, God, or whatever.

The fact of the matter is that the individual human, unaware of this unity, pulls in one direction and finds himself in turn pulled in the opposite direction. He does not know the origin of the thought which makes him pull in a particular direction. He considers himself separate from his environment; he does not truly know whether any action of his is really of his own volition or is predetermined; he thinks he can shape his own destiny and is yet piteously anxious to know his future from a seer or an astrologer. He does not realize that his confusion lies within and not without, in the tangle of his conceptualization and not in the convolutions of the endless knot.

Inspite of the pronouncements of the modern scientist confirming the interconnectedness of all things and events, and the basic oneness of all phenomena,

(including the individual human), man's total involvement with nature is still viewed with considerable suspicion and concern. This is because the individual human, it seems, ~~is~~ just cannot ~~seem to~~ accept the fact that his individuality, and more importantly, his individual volition, is no more than an illusion. Even more significantly, perhaps, is the frightening ~~thought~~ realization that man's oneness with nature in a seamless unity ineluctably implies that the individual's impulses, urges, ideals, the very motivations are in fact nothing more than "abstract intellectual ghosts"; and that therefore the individual's life ~~as~~ as an integral part of the universal life of events can have no individual purpose or special meaning. This thought indeed frightens the individual because without his ideals and motivations, he is a "nothing" in the nothingness of a/ purposeless world.

In actuality, ~~the~~ purpose (and ideals) as the basis of the individual life is nothing but conditioning, and the loss of this apparent basis appears ~~is~~ frightening only because the focus of interest has mistakenly ~~due to the conditioning,~~ shifted from the event itself to its reaction on the ego from the viewpoint of the illusory purposes and ideals. Meaning and purpose behind any act or event has any significance only for the individual human being and not for any other sentient being. Only the individual human considers time or ~~duration~~ duration as independent phenomena which affect him. Thus to consider that the world has no meaning or purpose is to say that the world is not based on humanity — or, as the Tao Te Ching puts it, "Heaven and Earth are not human-hearted." What is not human in nature seems inhuman only when the matter is considered from the viewpoint of the separated individual human, from the split-mind of the individual, that is, when ~~the~~ seen as a separate ~~[illegible]~~ part of the totality. The question is never asked: if nature is not human in certain of its aspects and has no purpose as envisaged by

the individual human, then what does it have in place of the purpose which it does not have? Nature is not to be seen in terms of human thought, logic and language which are necessary for man in an entirely different context. The rest of nature is not concerned with the language and logic of man. As some writer has put it, "may it not be that when we speak of nature as blind, and of matter-energy as unintelligent, we are simply projecting upon them the blankness which we feel when we try to know our own consciousness as an object, when we try to see our own eyes (without the help of a mirror) or taste our own tongues?"

The fact of the matter is that the individual human considers himself superior to the other sentient beings because he is endowed with intellect, leading to the acquisition of rational thought and conscious attention. He forgets, however, that the individual human organism is not basically different from the inanimate thing or any other living sentient object. It has the same integration at the moment of its birth or appearance, as the inanimate elements; it disintegrates or dies but only in order to reintegrate into a similar structure. In other words, whilst the inanimate object is only born once and only dies once, the living organism is born, dies and is reborn ceaselessly until it finally disintegrates at the end of its "life". The human organism, in addition to the two essences of the inanimate and animate phenomenal objects, is endowed with the third essence of "intellect". It is this third essence — the intellect — which makes the individual human think that he is a separate entity with autonomy and independence of choice, and action concerning his individual aims and ideals. In other words, the individual human is "made" of the same basic elements plus sentience plus intellect, and

is an intrinsic part of the totality of nature. If, therefore, the individual human thinks (because of his intellectual processes) that he has his own aims and purposes and ideals in what he considers his "life", the totality of nature is quite unconcerned about them. The entire nature is a manifestation of consciousness in consciousness, and the inanimate, the animate and the human are all manifestations, on three different planes, of the same consciousness, the same cosmic mind-energy.

It is only because we have lost the sense or the feeling of the wholeness of the endless knot, that we think of action in terms of the alternatives of freedom and fate, voluntarism and determinism and forget that these terms are truly interconnected and polaric. The real problem is not that we have developed the sense of individual or personalized consciousness but that we consider this to be incompatible with the feeling of expanded consciousness which would enable us to see and feel nature from within. The fact of the matter is that the two are not only not incompatible, but that our individual perception is indeed all the better, all the keener against the background of totality, because then our perception has perspective. The individual leaf can be seen in its full clarity not in
69 separation, but only in relation to the branch and the whole tree. We can truly appreciate an individual figure in a painting only in relation to, and against the background of, the whole painting.

To see and feel nature from within means not asking what the world is. The "what" implies classification and measurement. Classification is a human achievement which separates the human from nature, and separation means conflict

and unhappiness; separation means a boundary line, and a boundary line means a battleline. To ask what something is in its natural state is a misconception. To ask what a rose is, is to miss the point altogether because the rose cannot be anything other than its natural perfume. To find out what anything is in its natural state the only way is to perceive it with a silent mind, to be that. The warmness or coolness of water can only be experienced, it cannot be described. This silent perceiving or cognizing is precisely what is meant by "feel" as such, not the personal feeling. Excessive verbal communication has become so compulsive and widespread that it is taken for granted as the only way to understand anything. There is the incident of the Japanese artist Hasegawa bursting out in exasperation at his Western students with their ceaseless requests for explanations, "What is the matter with you guys? Aren't you able to feel?" In fact it can be understood from this why there is so much of the myth in almost every religion: the myth is the easiest way to make the simple and unlearned listener get the "feel" of what was being said at the metaphysical level. This is what is generally ignored or forgotten when the sophisticated scholar analyzes, criticizes and belittles the myths in the organized religions.

The naturalism of the Tao, the Chinese system of practical philosophy, is essentially a way of life in which the individual or personal consciousness is in operation while retaining the original feeling of the seamless unity of nature. What it involves is a completely new way of thinking and action in regard to both the function of effort, discipline and exercise of will power, and also the pursuit of pleasure as opposed to the unacceptable. It is based on the understanding that any action, considered as the result of personal effort means in effect the strengthening of the ego and the

divided mind; indeed, any action, deliberately intended as the result of this supposed understanding, is not natural. ~~This is the double-bind~~. This frustration is itself the result of a false understanding by the ego. And it is because of this ~~f~~ very fact that Nisargadatta Maharaj repeatedly asseverated that the natural act is that in which the ego is not present, and that it can only be the spontaneously emanating effect of the right understanding itself, containing no positive personal effort as such.

The essence of such apperception which leads to natural action is a depth of understanding which accepts all psychosomatic organisms as vehicles or instruments through which the Totality of Nature functions; and each action, each event, becomes spontaneity which is the essence of all natural action, the "controlled accident" of doing precisely the right thing at the right time, at the right place, without any self-conscious volition or purpose. The depth of such understanding comports the realization that all events, though perhaps not very acceptable in the immediate context, are indeed part of the totality, and that there is truly no individual as such who can be seen as the perpetrator of that event and therefore an "enemy". The result is that it then becomes a habit to take life as it comes, witnessing the events as they occur, without reading in it any individual as the cause or any pattern in the events which affects one individually: the focus of interest remains neither the past nor the future but the present moment, ~~that~~ "the still point of the turning world" and the centre of the rotation of seasons.

It is necessary to realize that the true return to natural spontaneity does not demand ~~the~~ any break in what-is or any change such as the back-to-nature romanticism. This is so because natural spontaneity essentially means the willing

acceptance of 'what-is' in the present moment without any desire to change it. Any desire and action to change what-is is the individual misconceived volition, which cannot possibly be natural spontaneity by any stretch of the imagination. The usual question at this stage is: is the individual then to live like a vegetable? The answer is that the natural and spontaneous action will follow in the ordinary course according to the inherent temperament and capacity of each organism which is an integral part of Nature. It is only when this natural action is interrupted by the working of the split-mind that the harmonious flow of the natural action is broken and conflict results. The split-mind thinks in terms of the acceptable and the unacceptable as irreconcilable opposites, without really knowing what is truly acceptable and what is not: what seems acceptable today in certain circumstances may not seem so tomorrow in other circumstances. All that the split-mind does is like the dancer interrupting the dance with a simultaneous effort to understand and explain to himself the precise significance of each movement, which must necessarily be a disaster.

What then is the individual supposed to do? Very simply, to remember that he is an individual trying to swim against the current, and to realize that there truly is nothing for the separate illusory individual (he is in every way an integral part of the totality of Nature) to do except float with the magnificent current of totality in the ecstasy (not frustration) of his oneness with the cosmic current. What does the dreamer do with his dream except passively witnessing it without judgment? What can a spectator do except to witness any spectacle over which he has no control? What can anyone do in any situation over which he has absolutely no control? Just let-go, because the situation truly is not outside him. He *is* the situation. And the piquant point is that

there is truly no individual deliberately and consciously to "let go"! When there is apperception, when the understanding becomes an unshakable conviction, the letting-go happens ~~of~~ on its own. Then there is no individual as such who is expected to let go. In other words, such understanding comports the conviction that the "individual" is a mental image, an illusion which itself was an obstruction to the letting-go.

What is the basis of this apperception which brings about the understanding and the consequent letting-go? It is ~~the~~ an <u>intensity</u> of feelings whereby ~~one~~ there is the realization that all feelings have an inherent ambivalence, an inescapable polarity of elation and depression, love and hate, humility and pride, that nature itself must contain this ambivalence without which perpetual joy would be as meaningless as a meal ~~of~~ restricted to only sweet things, and that "good" would have no meaning without "evil".

Excessive verbal expression becomes a drag on genuine feelings, and it is undoubtedly for this reason that in Vedanta in India, and Tao in China, the real centre is not the creative inventions of ideas but an ineffable <u>experience</u> that is concrete and non-verbal. Thus the spirit as distinguished from phenomenal nature or the nature (suchness) of various beings is not seen in their sharp contrast in the Eastern traditions. ~~but~~ Spirit then is <u>not</u> considered as a separation from Nature (~~not~~ such as the abstract from the concrete), but as the direct experience of the totality of nature in its non-conceptual state.

Verbal communication, "the characteristic disease of the West," is seen in its naked form in the question "What is it" that generally precedes every form of manifestation. There cannot possibly be any ~~word~~ description

to explain *what* the natural world is. The question itself is an indication of the extent and the depth of the verbal conditioning that has taken place, because what the question clearly implies is "how do you *classify* it?" All classification is a human invention, and the natural state does not emanate with any given classification. Words can separate what appears naturally as inseparable, but words cannot actually separate what is intrinsically inseparable. The only way to keep separation away is to keep words, that is, thoughts away from the feeling, so that what is natural may be felt in the silent mind. And, when thought is spent, when conceptualization is absent, the individual is no longer a separate entity but gets merged in the silent Nature as its intrinsic essence. Such silent perception is the "feel" which brings about the recovery of the sense of the infant's inherent sense of integrity with the natural world.

Conceptualization sees Nature and life as something constructed or built upon a certain set of principles or laws, like the plan of a building, and, indeed, sees "God" as the maker of the world with a certain purpose and meaning which the individual, as a separate entity, must find out for himself as his duty. The Eastern mysticism — Vedanta in India, Tao in China, and Zen in Japan — on the other hand, sees phenomenal nature not as a deliberate creation but as a spontaneous emanation or arising, organic rather than mechanical. Understanding Nature thus becomes not an intellectual exercise but a direct experience in mental silence. It is most important to understand very clearly that this state of mental silence does not mean keeping the mind dull or empty. Indeed, thought itself is very much a part of the natural functioning of Totality and is therefore not an "outsider". The point is that wordless contemplation can exist coincidentally with thinking when such thinking

is witnessed without judgment and, therefore, without involvement. What transpires then is an absence of the mind ceaselessly trying to split itself by ~~constantly~~ simultaneously trying to act and judge, to think and reflect on such thinking. There is an absence of "mental mitosis", an absence of a vicious circle of thoughts about thoughts about thoughts, which is like not struggling in a whirlpool. This means in effect "non-striving" against a current, floating at ease.

The first experience of seeing a photographic negative being developed — the emerging of the whole image on the plate or the film — is very often a
74 startling experience because one[74] is so conditioned to think of a thing as being constructed piece by piece. Similarly, to watch the formation of a crystal is a fascinating experience: it appears in the solution altogether at once and not piece by piece. Perhaps the fascination is an expression of the intuitive feeling we have that the phenomenal universe is a spontaneous, whole, concurrent occurrence. It also seems to stun one's intellect to see the lines of forces in a magnetic field constellating themselves in the iron filings in a sudden rush and not appearing serially. Perhaps because it is such a common sight, one does not realize it, but an infant grows, not bit by bit, but with its whole form growing from within, like a plant stem. This "within" growing spontaneously is what Nature is, quite unlike a God who is supposed to have created the world from "outside". Once this within-ness is realized, all sense of separation gets wondrously healed, and the interconnectedness of things-events and the oneness of the universe is felt without the need of any intellectual analysis.

The really inward, the truly within, cannot be an object because it is prior to the

conceptualized triad of observer-observed-observing. What we really are is this inwardness or withinness which expresses itself in the formation and working of our complex nervous systems, the individual contents himself with focussing his attention on — and identifying himself with — the narrow and superficial area of the conscious and the voluntary, forgetting or ignoring the truly vital unconscious and the involuntary. The idea of the separate "me" is so firmly established in our psyches that the very breath and the beat of the heart appear to belong to something other than the "me". It is thus convenient to think of God as a superhuman entity in comparison with the puny "me", a God who has created the world and is in charge of its working, including all the unconscious processes in the body. Thus God is conceived as being simply "a colossal magnification and multiplication of the conscious, analytical mode of knowledge", a marvellous conception which has at its root the monstrosity of a decapitated consciousness without any inwardness, knowing everything including himself, thoroughly transparent to his own conscious understanding. His subjectivity is thus made completely objective!

If we analyse this concept, we would find that at its root lies the old problem of the pairs of opposites seen as wholly unrelated instead of seeing them as the interrelated polar opposites, the very warp and woof of phenomenal nature. The individual, in associating death and decay with evil, conceives God as "being" and "life" as wholly opposed to "non-being" and "death", totally ignoring the basic fact that pure being and pure non-being are both conceptual myths. But as soon as the inner identity of these inseparable correlatives is felt with total conviction, this includes the identity between the individual and Nature, and

death is accepted as part of living,[#] a return to that unknown inwardness out of which the individual was born as an intrinsic part of Nature.

← The Individual and the Opposites in Life.

One of the biggest mysteries of nature, and perhaps the basis of man's unhappiness, is the existence of opposites, not irreversible, irreconcilable opposites but interrelated, polaric opposites, the kind in which one cannot exist without the other and, indeed, one is the very reason for the existence of the other. Polarity is something significantly more than mere opposition or duality; it means that the opposites are joined together inseparably, like the two ends of a stick or the two faces of a coin or the two poles of a magnet. What is called a magnet and has the properties of a magnet would not be a magnet but for the two opposite poles.

The polaric opposites become the basis of man's unhappiness because in considering the opposites in life, ~~man~~ the human individual forgets that the poles themselves are nothing more than mere abstract "terms" or "symbols" and that what is really significant and important is not the terms or symbols but what lies between the two poles. This is the problem of the individual's unhappiness because ~~it~~ thinking in ~~terms~~ terms means separating experiences into various classes and notional "intellectual pigeonholes". In other words, the human individual thinks in terms of individuality, and thus manages to divide in conceptualization what is truly undivided in nature. Is it surprizing that this unnatural dichotomy should separate the human being from his natural background and put him in a state of mind that he calls "unhappiness" or "misery" or "bondage", and from which he is for ever seeking liberation?

~~The oppositions which the human individual has, by his conceptualization, created for himself~~. Nature itself does not seem to know — or care — about ~~these~~ the man-made opposites or about this world of opposites. Nature seems perfectly satisfied and happy to produce a world of infinite, stupendous variety but

knows nothing about anything pretty or ugly, ethical or unethical. As Thoreau has said, nature never apologizes, never sees the need of it, obviously because it sees only delightful variety, not "errors of opposites". It is worth noting that it is the basic polarity of nature itself, on which the ~~thousands of years old~~ ancient Chinese culture has been founded, ~~of the polarity of darkness and light~~. This is what Lao Tzu has said on this most important matter:

> When everyone recognizes beauty as beautiful,
> there is already ugliness;
> When everyone recognizes goodness as good,
> there is already evil.
> "To be" and "not to be" arise mutually;
> Difficult and easy are mutually realized;
> Long and short are mutually contrasted;
> High and low are mutually posited; - - -
> Before and after are in mutual sequence.

And, ~~not~~ Chuang-Tzu, Lao Tzu's illustrious successor has said:

> Thus, those who say that they would have right without its correlate, wrong; good government without its correlate, misrule, do not apprehend the great principles of the universe, nor the nature of all creation. One might as well talk of the existence of Heaven without that of the Earth, or of the negative principle without the positive, ~~principle~~ which is clearly impossible. Yet people keep on discussing it without stop; such people must be either fools or knaves.

Many people, especially the Westerners, would firmly accept, as the perfect philosopher, Aristotle who considers that all action is choice and that the will moves into action only in so far as to make a choice, wise or otherwise, ~~between~~ some good in preference to something evil; but not Heraclitus who holds that

"it is one and the same thing to be living or dead, awake or asleep, young or old". By and large, as one modern philosopher has put it, Western culture is a celebration of the illusion that good may exist without evil, light without darkness, and pleasure without pain. And, the modern Eastern culture is not lagging far behind this view, although ironically enough, the modern Western culture — and the modern physics — find a strong attraction towards the ancient Eastern wisdom.

Modern physics has now left no room at all to doubt the essential polaric relationship in all nature. The age-old monumental separation of mass from energy has fallen to the Einsteinian equation, and the fact that the two ancient opposites of mass and energy are just two aspects of one phenomenon has been all too horrendously demonstrated in Hiroshima. Rest and motion have been quite indistinguishable — "each is both" — because what one observer sees as an object at rest, another observer, at the same time, sees it as being in motion. Quantum mechanics has turned the previously accepted "laws" of nature upside down and totally obsolete; the dichotomy between particle and wave has vanished, the "wavicle" has emerged, and the split between structure and function has evaporated. What is more, the new laws of physics have demolished the separation between the observer and the observed object to the extent that the observer is now an active "participant" in the spectacle his senses pick up; and there is more than a mild suggestion that "the dynamics of the observer's consciousness may not be separable from the dynamics of the world." What this means, in other words, is that there truly is neither an observer nor an observed object but simply, and precisely, the function of observe-ing.

It is not that opposites are not seen in life almost at every step but that underneath these opposites which are necessarily interrelated there is a basic

unity. ~~As L.L. Whyte has so forcefully put it :~~

> In biological development dualism or conflict is always superimposed on a prior unity. The existence of an organism capable of survival implies integration, and unity is therefore always prior to inner conflict. Conflict may arise as the result of an inappropriate adaptation, and it may prove fatal or it may be overcome. But the recovery of organic health never involves the synthesis of fundamentally opposed principles since these cannot exist in an organism. It only seems to do so because the actual condition of the organism has been misinterpreted in using a dualistic language.

It is because of this situation that time and space, subject and object, are now seen and treated for all practical purposes as being so intricately interdependent that they form a single unified organic pattern; there cannot be a transaction as such without both buying and selling. And so, what is now given due importance is not the opposite phenomena but the event which they both together bring about. An object needs space to appear in its three dimensions but it can never be perceived unless there is duration or time in which the perceiving can take place. Therefore space and time can not truly be understood separately except notionally for a specific analysis, and even such analysis would ~~truly~~ miss its ~~tr~~ true significance unless space-time is seen as one concept. In other words, from the viewpoint of "the coincidence of opposites" (what Nicholas of Cusa called the <u>coincidentia oppositorum</u>) what were generally considered as entirely irreconcilable opposites have turned out to be complementary aspects of one and the same phenomenon.

It is on these considerations that Alfred North Whitehead's philosophy of "organism"

and "vibratory existence" is based. It proposes that all the basic elements are in their essence "vibratory". This is what Nisargadatta Maharaj too repeatedly asserted, and he went so far as to say that all things and events, both welcomed and dreaded by human beings, are the results of these vibrations of the elements, concordant or conflicting as the case may be. In Whitehead's words, "a vibratory ebb and flow of an underlying energy or activity" is what describes the element in the universe. What this briefly means is that there cannot be a phenomenon like, say, a wave without the opposing aspects of a high and a low, a crest and a hollow, a high point and a low point.

I remember as a small boy avoiding the specs of dust illumined by a ray of the sun coming in from the window. It was quite a shock to learn later that the sun's ray did not bring the particles of dust, that they were present everywhere anyway, and that all that the sun's ray did was to bring them into prominence. As the Gestalt theory of perception says, we are not aware of an object or figure or event, any phenomenon except in relation to a contrasting background. However stark may be the contrast between the star and its background of darkness, the one cannot be perceived in the absence of the other. In other words, an image, or a tactile impression or a sound is recognizable only in contrast with relative formlessness or relative silence, and vice versa. It is interesting to note that in experiments concerning "sensory deprivation" — where the individual's perception is exposed to nothing but background, he finds it necessary to supply the missing figuration by fantasy. Such "pattern completion" takes place, in both seeing and hearing: localized regions of visual defects and the perceived visual patterns surrounding blind spots (scotomas) are extended through the non-seeing area by the perceiving brain;

similarly, when an obvious short word ~~is deleted~~ in a recorded sentence ~~is~~ cannot be heard because of sound disturbance, subjects have reported hearing the complete sentence. Thus ~~[illegible]~~ a square or any enclosed area cannot be conceived ~~with nothing~~ unless there is something ~~whatsoever~~ outside its border.

All this, says Alan Watts, translated into kinesthetics, amounts to the understanding that there cannot be any awareness of motion except in relation to stillness, or of the freedom of motion except in relation to a certain amount of resistance. It is revealing that Nisargadatta Maharaj used to say that manifestation cannot occur without a relationship of arrest and movement, ~~of frustration and effort~~; He further reiterated that consciousness is essentially a sensation of effort and frustration, and that the first stirring of the consciousness — the thought "I Am" — (the big bang of astronomy and physics!) was indeed a tremendous moan into the condition of an awareness of Existence from the absolute still state of unawareness of Existence. The whole point of this exposition is that the misery and unhappiness of the individual human being is due almost entirely to his ignoring this basic fact of unity in ~~all~~ the entire universe. Homer exclaimed in a burst of compassion for the human race, "Would that strife might perish from amongst gods and men." But, says Heraclitus, Homer was wrong: ~~because~~ "if that were to occur, then all things would cease to exist."

In the same manner, all our feelings can have any significance only in relation to their ~~opp~~ relative opposites. While the human individual abhors pain and discomfort, he would never be able to understand, let alone appreciate, pleasure and comfort. And yet, in his abysmal ignorance he forgets this basic fact of life and strives ~~for~~ with all his might for pleasure without pain and life without death. ~~Why is it so?~~

What has been said about the interdependence and inter-relationship of pleasure and pain and all the other ~~so~~ apparent opposites is not really difficult for the intellect to understand and accept. And yet there is something which seems to hold the human individual back from living his life ~~in~~ within this seemingly simple understanding. This is because while his comparatively young intellect might accept this obvious fact of the unity among the apparent opposites, the conditioning which he has been subjected to, not only since he was born but hundreds and thousands of years before his factual birth, ever since the emergence of intellect distinguished the human being apart from the other animals. This conditioning has had layers and layers added to it through generation after generation to such an extent that man has drawn an extraordinarily firm boundary ~~line~~ between himself and the other animals. He is so proud of the fact that he can think that he now considers himself capable, perhaps in due course, of creating life itself. And it is precisely this boundary that he has created and erected between himself within and the entire world without, that he ~~is~~ has ~~for a long time~~ forgotten his true nature and ~~th~~ has been asking himself repeatedly in his more "lucid" moments the question "Who am I"? And the greatest tragedy is that the question itself is the primary separation! No other animal is concerned with this question. And the joke is that with this question man has put himself in the supposed bondage and it is the pursuit of this very question — not the answer because there truly is none — that would lead him to the discovery that the human individual as such is quite illusory and that the individual cannot have any existence as an independent and autonomous entity. His existence in the universe is essentially only as a part of this universe, which is the objective expression of the subjective absolute, a universe that is "not composed of dead matter, but is, on the contrary, a living Presence," in which The Absolute is immanent.

It should therefore be clear that man's real and basic problem is that he has himself created the problem first by separating himself from the rest of the manifestation and then wanting, as a separate and independent entity, a part of life and not the whole of it, wanting ~~to~~ what he considers acceptable and rejecting what is not. The individual does not realize that in wanting # only the crest of pleasure and not the hollow of the ~~wave~~ pain, he is merely striving after illusions which ~~can~~ can lead only to frustration and misery, culminating in the utter terror of physical death. To put the matter another way, the average person "thinks" by paying attention to one term of a relationship ~~###~~ (the positive, or the pleasant, or the figure) ~~###~~ and ignoring the other term ~~###~~ (the negative, the unpleasant, the ground) ~~###~~ with the result that, without realizing it, ~~our~~ his viewpoint becomes distorted. Thought and its processes ~~get~~ get developed to the exclusion of intuition as the infant grows into childhood, and then very soon, the person confidently thinks of himself as the individual figure exclusive of the ground of nature.

As Alan Watts says, this contrast between the figure/ground image and ~~the~~ our almost exclusive conceptual interpretations is of the same kind which holds between mythic image and factual language. Perhaps our conscious ignoring of the ground is related to the psychological mechanism of repression, and also ~~perhaps~~ the reason why dreaming seems to ~~be~~ be a sort of ~~compensatory vision~~ vision that ~~is~~ compensates for conscious thought. Also, this is surely the reason why most forms of depth psychology seem to draw attention back to "the aspect of things which the conscious orientation of a society ignores and devalues," because after a certain stage, the ignoring of the essential ambivalence of nature leads to a neurotic attitude against the life-death phenomenon. In other words, whilst the separation of the essential from the inessential is the necessary

ingredient of the creative principle, it is clear that ~~it~~ this ~~sto~~ selective function of the intellect must not overstep its natural boundaries. The essence of life itself — all art, culture, nature — is not a conflict between motion and resistance, but a harmonious co-existence: if discipline (as control) is allowed to be ironclad, grace would be lost, if motion is allowed to overpower resistance altogether, the form itself dissolves. In nature, the opposites are always interrelated and work harmoniously, it is only in thought and conceptualization that they are separated. The principle of evil, the dark side of life is to be taken into account and dealt with, not so much because of the possibility that it might overwhelm the light, but essentially because darkness is indeed the condition precedent for there being any light at all.

82 There may be wisdom in the saying "Give the devil his due" because this appreciation of the two hands of God — the good and the bad — is truly what ~~makes~~ distinguishes the esoteric from the exoteric aspect of religion. The esoteric aspect is present in almost every religion, and certainly in all organized religions, but it is found to be generally guarded and kept closed because of the fact that this mystical aspect of religion is not easily intelligible to the average person who is likely to be confused ~~of~~ about the underlying unity of the opposites. Any attempt to explain this aspect of religion to those who are not intellectually and spiritually "ready for it" could not only confuse them intellectually but in practice ~~a~~ also make ordinary life almost impossible to live. As it is, even those who are naturally attracted to this esoteric aspect — and seem to understand the basics of it — are still baffled when a sage like Nisargadatta Maharaj tells them: "Understanding is all; once the understanding is present you may do what you like." These words may convey to the uninitiated the feeling that once there is the understanding, ~~they~~ the individual has the freedom, that is, the licence to perpetrate any evil and

scandalous deed. This would be an entirely erroneous interpretation. This is the reason why Jnaneshwar and other sages forbid such knowledge being ~~flaunted~~ propounded to all and sundry in a public place. There is also an another reason. Such knowledge is to be given to those few — a spiritually evolved elite minority of seekers — who could be trusted to keep the game going and not spoil it ~~because~~ thinking, "after all, it's only a game." The show must go on — the totality of manifestation and its functioning —, "the cosmic game of hide-and-seek, of God not letting his right hand know what his left hand is doing."

How does ~~the~~ a truly deep understanding of the two-sidedness of the One actually work ~~in~~ for a seeker? The first stage is an "expansion" of consciousness (truly, consciousness neither expands nor contracts) which represents the overcoming of the ~~veil or~~ covering of ignorance or the veil of Maya which brings about the appearance of multiplicity and otherness. This means that the seeker has transcended himself as a separate individual by his new awareness of his true nature. At this stage he sees through the game and is almost ready to opt himself out of the game because the ~~chase~~ game is not worth the candle. Who has this temptation? Obviously, the residue of the old ego-subject which is ~~infatuated~~ inebriated with his new discovery. As Buddha, at this stage, exclaimed, "O builder, I have discovered thee! Never shalt thou rebuild this fabric! Now the rafters are all shattered, and the ridge-pole lies broken!" Perhaps this moment is supposed to correspond with the *pralaya* (the final dissolution of the universe), when ~~the~~ conceptualization ceases with the discovery that the manifested universe is an illusion.

But the Hindu philosophy goes much deeper. It accepts the illusoriness of the manifested universe (including the human individual) —

the transcendence aspect — but at the same time, does not prevent the illusory individual from continuing with the game. The seeker who has become the sage must continue to play the game of hide and seek, good against evil, success against failure, in the full knowledge that it is a game, because the apparent manifested universe, although illusory like the shadow, can be present only because it is sustained by the immanent absolute. In other words, the transcendent aspect of the manifestation (the illusoriness) goes along with the immanent aspect (the illusoriness is the objective aspect of the absolute subject). The manifested universe is, of course, an illusion but that illusion could not have appeared by itself without the ground of the absolute unmanifest. The manifestation is certainly present but that presence is an appearance on the consciousness. The moving pictures certainly appear, but they could not have appeared in the absence of the screen on which they appear. So, the enlightened sage has become free of the bondage of the opposites:

Content with getting what arrives of itself
    Passed beyond the pairs, free from envy,
Not attached to success nor failure,
    Even acting, he is not bound.

8 It should be clear by now that the problems which the individual human considers himself beset by, are based on the belief that the opposites are supposed to be separated and kept apart, that the good and the beautiful must be sought to the absolute exclusion of all that is considered evil and ugly. "Freedom from the pairs", however, is what freedom truly means because any effort to separate one pole of a magnet from the other can only mean breaking the magnet itself. The "freed" sage is no longer interested in manipulating the opposites so as to choose one from the other, because he is content to accept both as the very basis of life. He fully understands that

what-is is not good against evil, not life against death; ~~but~~ there is a centre of attention or awareness that witnesses and transcends both. ~~The point really is not to accept both as go inevitably — and unfortunately — going together, but to accept both events as a harmonious pair which have this~~ a ~~common ground which both transcends and~~ and ~~is immanent in them, to accept the ground and see the pairs as the figure therein.~~

This freedom from pairs is the Kingdom of Heaven spoken of in the Bible, even though ~~most of the exegetists exegesists exegetists~~ most of the exegetists seem to have forgotten it. Heaven is not the state of all positive virtues and rewards to the exclusion of all negative items, but the state of transcendence of both positives and negatives. According to the Gospel of St. Thomas:

> They said to Him: Shall we then, being children, enter the Kingdom? Jesus said to them: When you make the two one, and When you make the inner as the outer and the outer as the inner and the above as the below, and when you make the male and the female into a single one, then you shall enter the Kingdom.

It is well-known that this idea of "no-two-ness" is the essence of the Hindu philosophy of Advaita (non-duality), and also of Mahayana Buddhism. The Lankavatara Sutra says:

> False imagination teaches that such things as light and shade, long and short, black and white, are different and are to be discriminated; but they are not independent of each other; they are only different aspects of the same thing, they are terms of relation, not of reality. Conditions of existence are not of a mutually exclusive character; in essence things are not two but one.

In other words, ultimate reality,

the unmanifest is unicity which for the purpose of manifesting itself objectively must necessarily use the instrumentation or mechanics of duality, the various pairs of interrelated opposites. The essential reality is the unmanifest, unaware of itself. Manifestation occurs as an appearance in consciousness simultaneously and concurrently with the arising of the conscious thought "I Am". Therefore what has appeared as a manifestation cannot be other than the unmanifest reality. That which appears in consciousness is some thing that is sensed by the senses and is perceived and cognized as form, sound, odour, taste and touch. When we distinguish one thing from another, we do so because each thing has been given a name in order to discriminate between them. Such discrimination is necessary only so that communication may be possible between man and man. When it is realized that the essential reality of each thing and all things would continue to remain the same even if the name and form of every thing is suddenly changed, discrimination as such ceases, and what remains is seen as the true essence of all things including the human, — and this is called in Mahayana Buddhism as the "Suchness" of Reality. As the Lankavatara Sutra says, "this universal, undifferentiated, inscrutable "Suchness" is the only Reality." It is also called the "Void" because it is void of all thought and therefore of all things.

Quantum Theory of mechanics has demolished the notion of basically separated objects, and the Eastern sage has always been talking of "All in one and one in all". The essence of what the Eastern sage has been saying and what the physicist now confirms is not some great mystery. In one's immediate attention or awareness there actually are no boundaries, no separate items of manifestation unless and until there is specific concentration on any particular item. To put it another way, one's visual field of a view at any moment of time would be a kaleidoscopic flux of all sorts of interwoven patterns and textures, of tree plus sky plus grass plus ground, and

waves plus sand plus rocks and clouds - - -". One does not see any particular item as a single, separate thing until thought intrudes and directs the attention to a separate thing, a pretty girl, or a striking combination of attire, or an unusual event or whatever. In other words, our normal vision is total; ~~and~~ it does not ~~does not~~ have ~~so~~ any separation, any boundaries until thought or conceptualization intrudes and <u>creates</u> the separateness which might give rise to a whole chain of other thoughts and reactions. That is to say, it is conceptualization that creates separation between the pairs as well as between objects and events, which in turn leads to conflict and unhappiness.

The realization that boundaries are a product of thought is at once the realization that the separation caused by these boundaries and the conflicts that ensue are <u>all</u> illusory. ~~The~~ Conflicts are caused by thought and trying to get rid of these conflicts by further thought is like trying to "wash off blood ~~by~~ with blood". Merely seeing that the conflict and the unhappiness is not real but illusory is the only way to <u>dissolve the problem</u>; ~~not to try~~ trying to solve it by further thinking and positive doing is merely making the matter worse. To this may be added one very valid observation: the basis of almost all thought, (other than the ~~technical~~ thinking on technical problems) is the individual — the "me" — and there just does not exist such a creature!

This idea of oneness, propounded now by both the sage and the physicist alike, appears most frustrating to those who have been brought up for centuries on the ~~principle~~ ideal of "making the world a better place" — pleasure without pain, health without sickness, wealth without poverty, success without failure, and indeed life without death! — ~~because~~ because it strikes at the very root of all that, for them, life stands for. ~~This is not surprising # inasmuch as~~ Their ideal is based on the

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very ~~thing~~ concept that makes for conflict and unhappiness, i.e. ~~e.g.~~ their linear (as distinct from cyclic) view of time and history. What the idea of one-without-a-second means in effect is the annihilation of the ego-subject, or the mind, or the individual (they are all synonyms), and thus the ~~the~~ supposed individual may well be excused if he considers the idea of oneness without separateness something analogous to the head being cut off to cure a persistent headache: ~~to~~ the answer to the individual's unhappiness and misery is the annihilation of the individual himself! The annihilation of the individual ~~in effect~~ really means dis-identification with the object with which there is identification, disidentification of the subjectivity (which every human being is) from the projected phenomenal self-hood. ~~This means, further, the deepest possible conviction that one is not conscious of anything — impossible.~~ Consciousness as such is all that "one" is. This conviction leads to what may be called "noumenal living", disidentified from the phenomenal object. Living noumenally means being in non-objective relation with all things; ~~being~~ being in non-objective relation with all things means living without volition; living without volition means ceasing to objectify, or in pure thought ("I Am") antecedent or prior to "name and form" — ~~to~~ merely witnessing without reaction all events, "moved only by the Will of God". This is what dis-identification means; identification means separation and conflict.

The philosophy that is thus outlined is, it must be firmly stated, ~~is~~ not just a theory that "sounds" good, but is indeed a working philosophy in the sense that its strength lies not in its words but in active practice of it. The significant point is that in trying to make the world a better place than it is, the immediate presumption is that that power which created the world is now in a position of utter helplessness, and that where God has failed, mighty man must take over because in the absence of man's individual and collective effort, the world has become chaos. The point is conveniently forgotten that man has been trying to improve the world for the last

several hundred years and if there is chaos as man sees it, it is man himself who is responsible. There are two aspects to this matter. One is that man has himself created the horrific problems which face mankind today, including the clear possibility of total annihilation through nuclear warfare, and is now feverishly trying to atone for it — by creating more and more terrible weapons in order to deter the "enemy" from using them! This is in itself almost a slapstick comedy situation. The other aspect, a more subtle one, is that it is no use blaming anyone for the present situation: the discovery of the theory of relativity by Albert Einstein was not the creation of Einstein's brain; he himself has gone on record to say that the formula came to him "from outside". For the formula to have come from outside ("outside" must obviously mean universal Mind or Consciousness), a brain had to be evolved which had the <u>capacity</u> to receive what was offered; which means a brain that was evolved by nature over a period of time. That the process of evolution culminated in a psychosomatic mechanism named "Albert Einstein" is almost an irrelevancy. Would it not seem, if the matter is considered from this viewpoint, that the individual human with his puny brain (donated through the courtesy of Nature!) is presumptuous beyond measure in either taking credit or blame for the existing state of the world?

If this is clearly understood, it would also be comprehended why the more we try to control the world, the faster it runs away from us. The fact of the matter is that we have separated ourselves from the universe with its unimaginably complex system of relationships, and that the more we collect and try to understand its details, the more it eludes us — by slyly revealing yet more details to study. Indeed a game of hide and seek,

the Lila of the universal consciousness in the functioning of its total manifestation!

It is only when the individual views the universe as inseparable from himself that he sees everything in perspective, so that with Lao-tzu he can say, "I know the whole universe without leaving my house". What is significant is that once this view of the universe becomes deeply ingrained in one's being, one truly understands "the winds the tides, the currents, the seasons, and the principles of growth and decay" so that one's actions happen to flow with them and not against them, because the whole principle of this working philosophy is "going with the grain." The secret of the real apprehension of this philosophy is that technology becomes destructive only when this oneness of the universe is not understood, and — even more significantly — that the not understanding of the oneness of the universe is also part of the what-is! This latter aspect of the apperception is important in the sense that the human individual who apperceives not only that the problem is created because conscious attention and linear thinking has upset the basic principles and the rhythms and pulse of the natural process of the universal working, but that, at the same time, this situation itself is part of the functioning of Totality. In other words the understanding of the problem means the dissolution of the problem and of the accompanying distress: "What-is" is precisely what God wants at this present moment.

The key to the relationship between the opposites is what is known in the Chinese philosophy as "mutual arising", like the opposite but inseparable sides of a coin, or the pulse and interval in vibration, so that the very existence of one is dependent on the other; there cannot be any question of a conflict between the two because the two opposites really are more like lovers in passionate embrace than enemies in mortal combat. Indeed, the original interrelated opposites are beingness and non-beingness, but for most people the very concept of

non-beingness is frightening because they consider it as the inseparable opposite of beingness, that is, the final and permanent end of everything including "themselves". They fail to realize that the imagined void is not ~~the~~ emptiness but fullness of potential out of which arises the beingness, that "being" can only come out of "nonbeing" precisely as sound can only come only out of silence and light from space. Could it be that the terror of the void arises from the fact that it cannot be made intelligible* in terms of material ~~bodies~~ bodies? The fact of the matter is that it is "almost impossible to give intelligible descriptions of elements or dimensions which are constant in all experiences — such as consciousness, time, motions or electricity." In regard to electricity, for example, it is interesting to note what the Encyclopaedia Britannica has to say:*

"Today, however, we find that the phenomena of electricity cannot be so explained, and the tendency is to explain all other phenomena in terms of electricity, taken as a fundamental thing. The question "What is electricity?" is essentially *unanswerable, if by it is sought an explanation of the nature of electricity in terms of material bodies*."

The "mutually arising" order of the natural forces ~~is~~ can be ~~seen~~ seen in the way the Chinese philosophy conceives the five energies as symbolized by *wood* which is the fuel which gives rise to *fire*, which creates ash and gives rise to *earth*, which in its mines contains *minerals* which (like the surface of a metal mirror) attracts dew, giving rise to *water*, which in turn nourishes *wood*.

This cyclical view of the working of the forces is seen in the yin-yang view of the duality in the world, giving rise to the serene "attitude of respectful trust towards nature and human nature". This can be seen in the story of a farmer whose horse

ran away. When the neighbours came to sympathize with him, he said, "Such bad luck? May be." The next day the horse returned and brought with it six wild horses, and the neighbours promptly ~~exclaimed~~ congratulated him on his good fortune, he again said, "May be." Then, the following day, when his son tried to saddle and ride one of the wild horses, he fell and broke his leg. When the neighbours commiserated with him, his answer once more was, "May be." The day after that, the conscription officers came to the village but the farmer's son was rejected because of his broken leg. When the neighbours who had again gathered, he said, "Everything turned out well? May be."

91/ This is the serene attitude that is most likely to follow a deep understanding of the polarity of opposites and the basic non-duality in the universe. It is not an attitude of pessimism and hopelessness, but rather one of serene acceptance of the fact that fortune and misfortune, ~~birth and death~~, sickness and health come and go, sometimes more frequently for some but they do go on all the time, and that therefore, constant change is life, and life is change all the time. The ~~mistake~~ error lies not in nature but in the attitude which demands that ~~nature~~ the course of nature halt at a particular moment of wellbeing. The fact of the matter is that you are the everlasting ~~and~~ unchanging moment if you establish yourself in that moment and merely witness the tide of changing relationships that is truly what we call life. It is a matter of realizing that the individual is ~~part~~ very much a part of the manifestation and its process of functioning, and that there is no way he can, as an individual, get himself out of that process. It is a matter of apperceiving that the universe is "a multi-dimensional network of jewels, each one containing the reflections of all the others ad infinitum", each jewel being a "thing-event" and there being no obstruction between one thing-event and another. In other words thing-events take place according to their allotted function, the supposed volition of the supposed individual being altogether irrelevant; the

whole cosmos is implicit unicity although expressed in explicit duality, and therefore every point in the cosmos must necessarily be considered as its centre. It is not so difficult to imagine the sense of magnificence that comes out of an apperception of the nature of the individual in relation to the manifestation: the loss of individuality is exchanged for the gain of the totality of the cosmos.

What does the true comprehension of the polarity of opposites ultimately mean? It means being aware of whatever that actually IS, without getting involved in it through an effort to measure it, to judge it, or give it a specific name or label. It means being an intrinsic part of that reality of "what-is" instead of merely having a concept about it. An objection? — that it is in fact impossible to suppress the flush of thoughts and ideas, and the babble of words that arise almost simultaneously with the perceiving? Ah, but is this also not part of the "what-is" at that moment and therefore merely a part of the "what-is" those is to be aware about? The point is not really to ignore or suppress the thoughts and ideas that arise, but merely to be aware of them as part of the what-is. You ask "What would then happen?" What would then happen is that instead of the horizontal proliferation of the thoughts and words, followed by the reaction of futility and frustration (further followed by a mental dialogue), the calm awareness or the witnessing of the "what-is" would vertically cut off such horizontal proliferation. Indeed, the arising of the horizontal involvement of thought and the vertical cutting off of such involvement would, in the beginning, happen at very frequent intervals, but, gradually, the witnessing — the awareness without judgment — would take over; the intervals between involvements would become longer and longer until, suddenly, there would be the realization

continuous

that awareness has become a steady phenomenon like the ^a stream of oil being poured out.

What it all boils down to is the ineluctable fact that in the absence of any real discrimination between opposites — positive and negative, being and non-being, appearance and void, subject and object — there is identity, but identity as such, being subjectivity, cannot perceive itself — and that is what we are, our true nature. Everything, in other words, then is both and neither is any object; unconceived, they are totally inseparable, and separate only as concepts. In the words of the Chinese sage, Huang-po, "there is no difference between sentient beings and Buddhas, or between Samsara and Nirvana, or between delusion and bodhi. When all such forms are abandoned there is the Buddha."

The Individual and his Mind

The individual and his mind — any thinking based on the premise that the individual is an entity and that he has a mind of his own, is bound to lead into grave intellectual problems and dead-ends.

What is the individual human as an object? What is it that makes him basically and essentially different from a natural inanimate object, a motor car (i.e. a machine), or a chimpanzee[2] (man's closest relative)? In other words, if we consider the human individual as a microcosm, as a computer, and as an ape, in what area do we look for the fundamental distinction? At one time the individual believed that spirits and humours inhabited the body; he loved with his "heart" and he could not "stomach" certain things — but science soon[3] made it clear that the heart is a mere pump and the stomach a chemical factory. The result was that the spirits, thus exorcised, "went straight to our heads, like bats to the belfry." And now the individual human makes frantic efforts to discover himself, to discover his true nature "in the vast machinery of our brain or in the unique abilities and predilections we call our mind."

It is almost impossible to think of "mind" without its physical representation, which is the "brain". In fact the two words are, more often than not, used as synonyms. Steven Levy gives his reaction to his finding Einstein's brain as follows: "I had risen up to look into the jar, but now I was sunk in my chair, speechless. My eyes were fixed on that jar as I tried to comprehend that these pieces of gunk bobbing up and down had caused a revolution in physics and quite possibly changed the course of civilization. There it was."

Indeed, there it is — the tragic misconception that the brain, the physical matter, could produce the essential thought which was the basis of the revolution. Einstein has stated quite unequivocally that the equation "came from outside," obviously meaning that his "individual" thinking did not lead him to the equation but that his brain was capable of <u>receiving</u> the equation which "came from outside." The totality of functioning — what the Buddhist calls the Mind (with a capital M) and what the Vedantin calls Consciousness — needed a brain that would be capable of receiving ~~the~~ nature's gift of the equation, and it happened to be the Einstein ~~'s~~ brain that was evolved over a period. To consider that it was a superior individual human, called Albert Einstein, who "created" the equation in his brain is to miss the point altogether.

The human brain is nothing but three pounds or so of living tissue, made up of "blood vessels, some membranous linings, some fluid-filled cavities, and many billions of specialized cells, the most important of which are ~~ten~~ about ten
9½/ billion neurons", together forming a communications network of unbelievable complexity. The brain is the operating centre of the body and is in charge of ~~the psychosomatic apparatus~~, ~~not only~~ overseeing all the vital processes in ~~the~~ the psychosomatic apparatus. It must be realized that this operating centre cannot function without the necessary "Energy of life", <u>the animus</u>, which comes from ~~the~~ consciousness, the knowledge "I AM". While the operating centre in the brain creates the sense of oneness on the various parts of the body, and, more importantly the sense of separate selfhood, the realization that our true nature is not the operating centre but the functional centre — the consciousness which is common to all individual

bodies — is what is generally understood as self-realization or enlightenment. Indeed, what this self-realization amounts to is the apperception that all that exists is Consciousness which provides sentience — and life itself — to all sentient objects, and that human beings are mere objects without any separate autonomous existence. If electricity is turned off at the source all objects depending for their existence on electricity would cease to function. Likewise it should be quite easily comprehensible that if consciousness is turned off by that supreme being (called God or by any other name like the Absolute or Consciousness) from which has emanated this manifestation, all human beings and other sentient objects would be dead material.

In regard to the nature of the mind, Ramana Maharshi, the sage of Arunachala, has explained that the mind is nothing other than the "me"-thought, that the "you" and the "he" — the second and the third person pronouns — arise only after the first person "me" appears, that the mind and the ego are one and the same, and that the intellect and the memory (the collection of mental tendencies) are all the one mind, the different names being similar to the different appellations given to the different functions of the same person. The individual human is nothing but this ego. This means that it is erroneous and fallacious to think that there is an individual self which functions through the body and the mind. The "me" as an individual self is a mental modification. Actually, there is no such thing as mind apart from thought. It is because of the emergence of thought that a source of thought is conceived and is termed as "mind." When the source of thought is probed continuously as it arises, it is clearly found that there is no such thing as mind.

When this actual position is not clearly understood, one tries to seek the connection between the brain and the mind, and lands oneself into utter confusion and futile controversies. To a certain extent, perhaps, the concept of mind as the source of thought, a thing, instead of an activity in relation to the brain, is based on the conditioning that every noun must be a thing, endowed with some permanence, and with an enduring aspect of its own. But in this kind of thinking, it is forgotten or ignored that the "me" today is not really the "me" that was some time ago because dying cells are all the time being replaced by new ones, and the matter making up a cell is spent and replaced. But then, even the almost inevitable conclusion that mind is an aspect or function of the physical brain is not truly acceptable. Even if we did know the entire mechanism of the brain (which we do not know today) that is supposed to give rise to the mind, we cannot conceive any mechanism giving rise to the mind. This is the problem which Schopenhauer calls the "world knot". Even if we did have full knowledge of how information filters in through the senses and gets processed, how memories are stored, skills learned and decisions made, and how our muscles, glands and all vital functions controlled, we would perhaps still not know much about thoughts and sensations and their association with consciousness.

Where are thoughts made? This is the question that bothers — and humbles — the neurophysician. Evidence and research concerning the construction and activity of the brain could easily mislead the scientist into believing that the individual — the knower — is only an effect of the activity of the billions of neurons in the brain in communication with one another, and that / consciousness ceases

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to exist as soon as the brain ceases to act. A thought is a sensation that contains significant ingredients of memory into the past, a projection into the future, and sensory stimulations. What this means is that a verbal structure is created around certain phenomena and, then a certain physical entity is attached to them. All kinds of questions arise if one begins to include ~~own~~ thoughts in the dynamics of the body. Are thoughts then reducible to the past and present stimuli that are processed through our internal hormonal and neuronal computers? While the machine metaphor is useful to a certain extent when studying the functioning of various ~~to~~ body parts including the brain, the fact remains that while there can be an unconditional release of all stored information in the case of a computer, there cannot be any such transfer of information between human individuals. Man's fear of the void of death refers more to his own personal knowledge than anything else because that is what for him constitutes his individuality. This is what has led to the unprecedented assault, in the last fifteen years, on what constitutes "mind", and whether there is something called "self" independent of the brain. The ~~psi~~ intellectual drama contained in this search is further heightened by the acceptance by ~~contention of~~ the modern scientists that knowledge, although "irrationally" acquired does have a value and that physical events defying physical "laws" do have a validity. The entire discussion is based on the assumption that the human individual is an autonomic ~~autonomous~~ and independent entity with volition, and such discussion must go on until it is realized that the very ~~any~~ assumption of the independence of the human individual is wholly illusory. The crux of the matter is the question: Who (or what) is it that wants to know? — and is it possible for the mind to know its own source?

It is interesting to note what physically constitutes the individuality or selfhood of the human object. The characteristic structural features of every human are determined by the inherited blueprint contained in the molecules of DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) in which are combined both the actual and latent features from the two parents. Characteristics known to be determined in this way include not only the physical features and stature, body type, and colour of hair and eyes, but also perhaps such mental and emotional features such as a tendency towards artistic expression, ambition or lack of it, boldness or timidity, and others. This is at one end of the scale of structures constituting our bodies; at the other end of the scale, precise structures of large molecules are specified by the parental determinants such as the nucleic acids (including DNA) which are the carriers of genetic information, and the proteins such as the histocompatibility antigens which define for each individual a unique selfhood (recognized as one's own by the immunity system that guards the individual against incursions by foreign bodies). The individuality of the proteins is wholly genetic while the individuality of the personal experiences belongs to the central nervous system.

It would seem that while specifying most characteristics at the two ends of the structural scale, nature leaves the details in the middle range to be filled in by, what must be called, chance. A viable organism would not be hampered in its functioning even if the intermediate details were not specified in the DNA blueprint. It would thus seem that Nature shows its hand in the DNA blueprint but reserves a certain mystery for itself through "chance".

The early pictorial representations of the brain show some empty space set aside for the storage of past events, or memory. Both in human memory and computer memory, there is a core memory, limited in volume but quickly accessible as contrasted with the peripheral memory (like the search for a library reference or a word in the dictionary) the reading of which is comparatively much slower. Since the days of Aristotle the idea had prevailed that events constituting experience leave their impression on the brain, starting with a blank page. Today we no longer believe in such a <u>tabula</u> <u>rasa</u> concerning the brain, and we accept that our born personalities contain a mixture of nature and experience, although the relative proportion may be a matter of dispute among the experts.

If it is accepted that memory is physical, it must necessarily have a location, and it was a young phisiological psychologist called Karl S. Lashley, who started a hunt for the seat of memory in 1926. The culmination of this hunt, which lasted for almost twenty-five years, was his now famous paper "In Search of the Engram" in 1950. Not only did he not find the location of the engram (the physical record), nor that of the learning mechanism in the brain, but he did find that for most complex tasks, involving perhaps several different senses, all parts of the neo-cortex made their individual contributions which were of almost equal value. He concluded therefore that any single event must necessarily involve the activity of perhaps millions of neurons scattered all over the neocortex. Since then the idea of a "distributed memory" has been the prevalent view, a view which has substantially gained support after the invention of the laser hologram in the early sixties — a scene recorded on photographic film appears, after due processing, in three dimensional form as if the original object was standing in space.

The two more interesting aspects of the

hologram are (1) that any small part of the film can be used to reproduce the entire scene, which means that the entire scene is contained in every part of the film, or, that while every piece has a little bit about every other part, no piece is essential; and (2) that one can superimpose any number of holograms on the same piece of film and then reproduce them separately one by one. Brain theorists were, of course, greatly attracted to this case of distributed memory, and it has even been suggested that the whole world is a hologram. There are, of course, other scientists who do not attach all that much importance to the holographic theory of memory. But such a theory would, to a large extent, explain the many mysteries of 'memories' in "past lives", and, more importantly, explain the evolutionary processes of the brain in case of prodigies and geniuses in
19 every field of activity, whether it is an Einstein or a Mozart, or a Jnaneshwar.

The precise dynamics of the brain are determined by the strengths and distribution of the synapses, that is to say, by the trillions of connections made by the billions of neurons in the human neocortex with one another. It would seem from this vastness and precision of this structural mass that nothing in it is left to chance. And yet we find considerable variability even in the genetically identical neural structures (twins), which would indicate that the early effects of chance frozen into the infant brain would have a great deal to do with the memories that will be formed in due course. In other words, chance is turned into essence, and this melding constitutes the unique individuality of each of the humans, an individuality based not only on the DNA, but also a memory traced from perhaps millions of earlier holograms. It would seem to be a clear indication that nature brings about the required

thought-pattern according to the needs of the evolutionary process in every field of activity, maintaining a close interrelationship and unity in the mind-boggling diversity.

The question arises: what precisely is the position of the neocortex in the brain in regard to the thinking process? Is there a self-supporting "thinking cap" in the brain? The neo-cortex, inspite of all the complexity in its structure and its privileged position in the brain, is not capable of thought. It is the structure known as RAS, the reticular activating system in the brainstem, without which consciousness cannot exist, and permanent damage to which would mean instant, irreversible coma. On the other hand, even extensive damage in the cortex will not impair consciousness because no single portion of it is essential for conscious activity. It would thus be difficult to accept the idea of an independent thinking centre in the cortex. Moreover, there are two interesting phenomena which discount the supreme importance of the cortex. One is what the psychologists call "projection" concerning the fact that an external event picked up by our senses is felt not at the receiving end but at the source; for instance, the ring of the bell is in the bell tower and not in our brain, and the source is precisely located. There is similarly a projection not in space but in time. Scientific experiments clearly suggest that as much as a half second elapses before one becomes conscious of an event picked up by our senses. In other words, we are continuously living in the past!

What the spatial and durational projections bring out is the fact that we are not the imagined conscious self in a brain capsule but that our cognitive selves are out-side the body. In other words, it means, most significantly, that perception and cognition extends well beyond the braincase, out into the open and that our braincases are in fact mere recording instruments. Niels Bohr makes the suggestion

that we do not even really know what the boundary of our observing self is: "We cannot even tell which particular molecules belong to a living organism." Would this not clearly point to the fact that consciousness is not an individual "possession" but something universal out there in which the world itself appears as a hologram?

An interesting sideline about this matter of the location of consciousness in any particular part of the body is what the great sage of modern times — Bhagawan Ramana Maharshi — said concerning the subject. He had always averred that the Heart is the centre of the Self, the supreme centre, behind the _jiva_ or the individual ego-self, this Heart being not the physical heart on the left but something on the right, which cannot be known by the mind or realized by imagination: "The only direct way to realize it is to cease to fantacize and be yourself. When ~~you realize~~ there is realization, you ~~automatically~~ intuitively _feel_ that the centre is there." He went on to say that he chanced upon a verse in the Malayalam version (one of the South Indian languages) of _Ashtangahridayam_, the standard work on the Hindu system of medicine called _Ayurveda_, wherein the _ojas sthana_ (source of ~~bodily vitality~~ physical energy or "place of light") is mentioned as being located in the right side of the chest and called the seat of consciousness (_samvit_). It seemed odd that the Maharshi should have fixed a place for the Heart, thereby implying physiological limitations to consciousness which metaphysically is beyond space and time. But he made it clear that the answer was in reference to a question by a person who had identified himself with his body. He asked the questioner: "While putting the question now, would you say that your body alone is here but that you are speaking from somewhere else?" From the

metaphysical point of view, it must be clearly understood that pure consciousness is truly indivisible, without shape or form, without any "within" or "without". From this absolute standpoint, the Heart, as the "seat" of consciousness cannot have any specific place assigned to it in the physical body. In the true perspective, consciousness is all that exists — every sentient being feels "I am" — and the physical bodies of the sentient beings are the instruments ~~or gadgets~~ through which consciousness expresses itself objectively just as electricity (as an aspect of the energy that is consciousness) expresses itself through various ~~gadgets and~~ objects.

Says A.N. Whitehead, "---- But the mind, in apprehending, also experiences sensations which, properly speaking, are qualities of the mind alone. These sensations are projected by the mind so as to clothe appropriate bodies in external nature. Thus the bodies are perceived as with qualities which in reality do not belong to them, qualities which are in fact purely the offspring of the mind. Thus nature gets credit which should in truth be reserved for ourselves: the rose for its scent, the nightingale for its song, the sun for its radiance.... Nature is a dull affair, soundless, scentless, colourless; merely the hurrying of ~~matter~~ material endlessly, meaninglessly." What Whitehead means, in other words, is that a mind that could apprehend the object-world as it truly is, without any modification or error, would know precisely nothing at all: the whole-mind of the jnani or the sage.

10 There are processes which go beyond the concept of the sensory-motor brain; they include both sensory inputs modified by the manipulative mind without necessarily leading to motor action, and also motor actions that emerge spontaneously or as a result of ~~thought~~ cerebral activity or thought. There is a clear distinction between

mere "seeing" and "perceiving". What actually happens is that instead of merely "seeing" — which is a process of information flow from the receptors to the brain — the LGN (lateral geniculate nucleus), the simple relay station gets transformed into a filtering place where the message from the eyes gets mixed with the echo from the cortex; and "seeing" becomes "perceiving" through the cortex reaching out to the periphery, "intercepting the incoming messages, filtering and altering its own input", interweaving fact and fancy on this "internal retina". The extent to which this interweaving of fact and fancy happens is astonishing. There is a phenomenon known as "pattern completion", whereby omissions ~~of~~ or defects of visual patterns or recorded sentences go quite unnoticed, and the subjects carry on as if they had seen the whole visual pattern or heard the entire sentence. What has happened is that the mind has interpreted reality by modifying it: the split-mind of the ordinary individual. What this means is that there is a correlation between the fantasizing mind and the sensory control. There is the obvious need in life for a balance because the excess of one could mean being adrift with dreams and hallucinations while the excess of the other could mean pedestrian and unimaginative perceptions. A slightly hazy picture can give rise to various interpretations while a too sharply focussed one can deaden the sensibility. A painting with all objects sharply shown irrespective of the distance between them gives the impression of unreality ~~whereas~~ as compared to one done in perspective.

There is another aspect to the subject of perception, whereby it is believed that perception is a direct process involving a minimum of cerebral activity.
103 Thus, James J. Gibson of[10] Cornell University, in his "Theory of Affordances", ~~propounds~~ talks of ~~that~~ affordances "being considered as intrinsic in the stimulus, e.g., a rigid object with a sharp dihedral angle, an edge, affords cutting and scraping — it is a

knife." Also, in gestalt psychology, the properties of every perceived object are supposed to be contained in the direct stimulus engendered by the object — thus, a fruit says "eat me", thunder and lightning says "fear me", and woman says "love me."

It would seem that both points of view have some relevance ~~to~~ at some time or the other, in some circumstances or other. The fact, however, remains that when an object evokes an unusually strong reaction of conflict or emotion, perception may not remain as a direct perception because the immediate, direct perception could well be manipulated to an extent which would totally distorts the direct perception. This is what makes a philosopher say that everything is in the mind.

It is often not realized that perception does not mean the operation necessarily of ~~any~~ only one of the senses. More often than not, it involves the simultaneous involvement of several senses. A breeze on one's face is felt because of various skin sensors; simultaneously you hear it and also see it as a movement in the leaves of a tree or on the surface of the water. So, ~~the~~ most of the events in everyday life are perceived as combinations of various sensations called sensory schemata, and if any one of these is absent, the mind makes ~~to~~ every effort to compensate for that absence because otherwise the perception would seem unreal and disturbing, eg. a howling storm outside seen from an air-conditioned room.

A look at the efferescent side of the brain would show that sensors are contained in every part of the apparatus of action (the muscles, the tendons, the joints), and conversely the somatosensory cortex, "the locus of our body sensations" borders on and probably "talks" ~~to~~ across to the motor cortex. In other words, actions produce sensations just as certainly as sensations cause actions. Indeed, the very thought of ~~action~~ an action brings

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about the associated sensations: "a train of thought generally contains both of these ingredients in a continuous feedback, one reinforcing the other." It is for this reason that the spiritual ~~sf~~ seeker is asked to resort to "witnessing" or "being consciously aware of" the very first thought (after a gap of the absence of thought) in order to cut off ~~the~~ the train of thought that would inevitably arise, thereby constituting what is called conceptualizing or objectivizing. Such witnessing is not of the mind but outside of it. The train of thought is a horizontal sequence of thought leading to ~~further~~ sensation or action which in its turn would give rise to further thinking. The witnessing is a vertical ~~breaking~~ operation which cuts off this horizontal sequence, which could result in a runaway situation, and in fact, does in case of mental disturbance. Normally, however, each sequence of thoughts gets cuts off ~~when~~ only when new and different sense impressions stream in and demand the attention of the central nervous system.

~~What is~~ Perhaps the most significant factor in the formation of a self-image, the "me" in everyone ~~? It~~ would be the factor of the existence (or otherwise) of volition or the freedom of will. The basis of most of the Eastern religions is the belief, even the faith, that it is only God (or by whatever ~~know~~ word the absolute principle is called) who determines the destiny of every man in the world. Even the Western religions have as their basis the basic principle, "Not me, but Thou, O Lord". And it is this deep faith in ~~the~~ predetermination which leads so many men, otherwise known for their independent thinking, to the fortune-teller to know what the future holds for them. If they truly believed that they hold their future in their own hands, they would never deign to go to the fortune-teller. On the other hand, the Eastern man ~~has faith in the~~ believes that ~~the~~ his

fate has already been determined when he was born, and yet believes in Karma, the basis of which is volition! It is this kind of double-bind which creates out of volition the tremendous problem that it has been over a long period.

105 The materialist scientist of the nineteenth century would consider the human being as a machine strictly subject to absolute, deterministic physical laws: "the outcome of human actions should be determined by the state of the machine and the stimuli impinging on it; free will must therefore be a delusion". Apart from a stubborn minority, few scientists would accept this approach, although several biologists do believe that science will be ultimately able "to reduce physical processes to predictable phenomena." There is, on the other hand, the dualist tradition which introduces the concept of a kind of "internal psychokinesis" in order to explain that freedom of will is achieved by the "mind", a "conscious non-physical entity, separate and independent of the brain", able to influence the brain and thus express its will. Sir John Eccles attempts to meet some serious difficulties with known physical laws by having the circuits of neurons in the brain so delicately poised that only a minute influence is needed for the desired effect to be produced. Still, the influence would be non-physical.

There is, of course, an inherent paradox in the traditional concept of freedom itself. There is supposed to be freedom only if actions are determined by drives and motivations, and such freedom is considered as being restricted if an external disturbance interferes with them. According to the dualist, the undisturbed functioning of the brain cannot be considered to be free because it is preordained by its own inherent dynamics, including needs, drives, etc. This problem is worse confounded when the dualist imposes another will on the brain, which in effect means the body's freedom is freedom from itself.

The only way to resolve this dilemma is to ask: for whom is this dilemma? And then we pass on to the field of metaphysics.

As the sage Ramana Maharshi puts it, destiny is the result of past action: cause becomes effect which in turn becomes the cause of further effect. The Maharshi endorses: "Let the body act as may suit it. Why are you concerned with it? Why do you pay attention to it?" Whatever happens is the result of past actions, of divine will and of other factors. In regard to free will, he says that there is a sense of enjoyment and of individual will only so long as there is the sense of doership. If this sense of doership is lost, it will be the divine will which will be seen as the one to guide the course of events. A specific question was put by a visitor: "Can it be that it was already decided that on such and such a day, at such and such an hour, I should move this handfan in this manner, and then put it down here?" The Maharshi's answer was "Certainly. Whatever this body is to do and whatever experiences it is to pass through was already decided when it came into existence." That was certainly clear, precise and without any equivocality.

Perhaps the matter will be seen in greater clarity if we consider a tricky question that was put to Ramana Maharshi: "If what is destined to happen will happen, is there any purpose in prayer or effort, or should we just remain actionless?" The answer was:

"There are only two ways to conquer destiny or be independent of it. One is to enquire for whom is this destiny and discover that only the ego is bound by destiny and not the Self, that the ego is non-existent. The other way is to kill the ego by completely surrendering to the Lord, by realizing one's helplessness and thinking all the time, "Not I but Thou, O Lord", giving up all sense

of "me" and "mine" and leaving it to the Lord to do what He likes with you.

It is rather a curious fact that the human being greatly values what he considers as the "freedom to act", in which sense the will is motivational, based on memories, associations, emotions questions of ethics and projections into the future. And yet he is never without some discomfort, some mental unease concerning what might have been if the decision were different. Indeed, his doubt extends to the question whether in identical circumstances again, he would take the same decision and act the same way. The fact of the matter is that it is almost impossible that the circumstances could be recreated in all details, and that there would be the same options to choose from. The recreation of a past set of alternatives has been called "contrafactual fallacy", that is to say, against the facts as they prevail, and therefore such thinking would be merely an exercise in futility, "the never-failing vice of fools", as Alexander Pope put it. Perhaps, in considering the question of freedom of the will or choice, it would be wise to restrict our role in the decision-making process to be merely that of witnessing!

It is an interesting fact that the actions of a human being at any moment would appear to be caused not by his conscious participation at that moment, but by the memory of what he thought and felt in the past. In a set of experiments reported by Benjamin Libet, a noted neurophysician, "he emphasized that the instant at which a subject is able to respond to a stimulus by an action of his own is not necessarily the time at which he becomes conscious of the event." In other words, what he says is that it is only by introspection that consciousness can be ascertained. He found that it takes up to about half a second for a stimulus to produce a response (during which time some form of neural

reverberation continues), that therefore actual sensations "are replays of events that are well in the past, but manage to convey to us the delusion of a conscious immediacy and participation." The significance of this fact is startling: we are living not in the present as we think but in the past. It follows that there is no present at all but only a shadow of what is already past. What is more, what we think as future will have been the past before we are aware of it. Life would thus seem to be "a grandiose hoax", unless we accept the metaphysical view of space-time as only a concept and not some <u>thing</u> to which we are bound as slaves.

It is rather a curious fact that physics, which has traditionally shown a clear bias
8 towards the objective qualities[10] of the universe (those which, upon measurement, yield the same values for any observer) should have, in recent times, "forced us into dilemmas in which it is almost impossible to maintain the neat separation between the observer and the observed." What this means in other words is that the human being observing a part of nature as an observer, becomes part of the very <u>dynamics</u> of what he observes. This clear shift from Edington's view of life as "an insignificant and very local accident in the universe", to that of John Wheeler who speaks of the "universe of mind and man", is due ~~to~~ very largely to the part ~~of~~ played by ~~phy~~ modern physics known as "quantum mechanics" ~~physics~~ which has something quite startling to tell us about the human mind. What has in fact happened is that the matter of scale of things and the question of unpredictability, ~~and~~ invading many macroscopic events in the "classical regime" have now been further complicated by the character of self-reference and quantum mechanics. The mere fact of observing affects what is being observed!

The microworld is <u>inherently</u> chaotic,

that is to say, unpredictable: a little bit of matter, barely visible under the microscope and suspended in a gas, is seen to go through jerky, totally unpredictable motions that result from the random movements of the gas molecules. This is wholly in agreement with the Vedantic postulate that the smallest particle in the universe is in constant movement, as if in a dance (hence the mythical Dance of Shiva). If the macroscopic world appears relatively stable, ~~and~~ ordered and reasonably predictable, it is because of the immense separation in scale; the unpredictability of the microcosm is averaged out into insignificance by the sheer magnitude in the macrocosm. Nonetheless, "there may be cross talk between the two realms and as a result microscopic uncertainty can be injected into the macroscopic world."

Human beings have come to expect the kind of stability seen in the earth's near-circular orbit around the sun in other physical systems as well,
109/ perhaps because physicists have so far concentrated their efforts on those systems which have well-behaved dynamics. But the intractables, such as the trajectories of tumbling dice, have been swept under the scientific carpet, and not much has been said about the so-called "chaotic systems." It is, however, becoming increasingly more apparent that chaotic systems are the rule in nature and not exceptions. They are all, in the classical sense, ordinary mechanical systems but "the dynamics are continually poised on knife-edge decisions whose outcome cannot be predicted." The microworld of ~~coiles~~ ceaselessly moving molecules ~~provides~~ would seem to provide fluctuations which are sufficient to intrude on large-scale phenomena in the case of the very delicately poised chaotic systems; and thus it would appear that our ignorance of the microworld must extend to the macroworld.

When one speaks or thinks about oneself — self-reference — one does not realize that this

"me", this self, is "forever imaging itself and changing in response to the image," and, to the extent that it can never catch up with itself, must necessarily remain undefined. The interesting part of this imaging process is that the imaging can and does take place very often not only from one's own viewpoint but also that of another, especially if the latter happens to be an opponent. And this is made even more interesting because both persons are under the same process of imaging as in the case of chess or poker game adversaries. What this kind of "reflexive dynamics" does in many cases is to bring about a special kind of indeterminacy because "as we keep going around the loops [structural loops contained in the human brain], the light of logic dims rapidly and becomes less and less compelling; Where we stop in our chain of reasoning and where the opponent stops are thus fundamentally unpredictable." The following is an extract from a New York Times editorial about the nuclear "balance of terror" between the Superpowers:

> "If we think *they* might launch a first strike on military targets, why shouldn't they think we might, particularly if we "stress" our capacity for selective strikes? And if both sides think that of the other, isn't one ultimately likely to try it before the other can?"

What the matter truly boils down is to the question: What is the nature of the selfhood, the nature of the "me" that contemplates itself, seeks or avoids itself? Is the whole thing merely a concept, "a product of its own self-contemplation, the work of a bootstrap process that can create something out of something?" The Indian mystic has, for the last several thousand years, been saying what he has intuitively seen: that the manifest universe is an appearance which has spontaneously arisen in consciousness

out of the unmanifest because that is its nature; the unmanifest is a state ~~in of~~ of beingness in which the static consciousness is not aware of itself, and the manifest universe arises spontaneously along with the movement in consciousness when the unmanifest suddenly becomes aware of itself ~~and the consciousness~~ when the thought "I AM" arises. Now, modern science, out of its own tortuous processes, seems to have come to the same conclusion. In what John Wheeler has called "self-reference cosmo~~logy~~gony", the origin of the universe is seen as the result of a singular event, "the big bang [the ~~consciousness~~ arising of "I AM"?], the umbilicus of everything that exists, but, unlike other big bang theories, ~~the~~ Wheeler's universe is a *self-excited system*," in which past, present and future are "wired together" in such a way that its birth is not released "until the blind accidents of evolution are guaranteed to produce, for some non-zero stretch of time in its history-to-be, the consciousness and consciousness of consciousness, and communicating community, that will give meaning to that Universe from start to finish." The end of the universe is foreseen by Wheeler dramatically as a collapse leading not to some continued dynamics that may deny life but very simply a sudden end, like smoke, figuratively speaking, rising from a machine at the critical moment. Suffice it to say that in Wheeler's cosmology — like that of some other scientists — consciousness is assigned a decisive role in the scheme of things. When the movement ceases, the manifested universe "collapses" in the consciousness in which it appeared.

Quantum mechanics is perhaps the most significant development in comparatively recent years to add to the traditional sources of confusion — chaos and uncertainty. ~~It~~ It ~~and~~ makes the picture even fuzzier, by the indeterminacy and the statistical significance of the fundamental laws of physics, as seen through quantum mechanics, the revolutionary theory which emerged around 1925 through the pioneering efforts of the Danish

physicist Niels Bohr, the Austrian Erwin Schroedinger, and the German Werner Heisenberg. Quantum mechanics is not just a capricious flight of imagination but an inevitable development, grounded on firm basis and almost compelled by incontrovertible, undeniable facts. The theory grew out of the realization that waves such as light waves, X-rays, and others, whilst having all the characteristics of waves, behave like particles under certain circumstances. In 1925, the French physicist De Broglie proposed the view that particles, for example electrons, may also have the properties of waves. And very soon, these "matter waves" were actually found in the laboratory. Finally, Schroedinger proposed a new type of mechanics appropriate to these entities that combine particle and wave properties, which came to be known as "quantum mechanics".

Among the concepts that emerged from this revolutionary theory is known as Heisenberg's "uncertainty principle" according to which "particles move with an _inherent_ fuzziness which allows us to specify only their probable locations, not where they _really_ are." What is even more startling is the emphatic proposition by Niels Bohr and others (the Copenhagen School), that the uncertainties are not merely an inadequate knowledge or understanding but that they concern Nature itself. In brief, what the theory tells us is that if an object has, say, a 40 per cent chance of being in one place and 60 per cent chance of being in another, the deciding factor is the observer himself. In other words, the observing "has not just recorded reality, _it has changed reality_." According to Eugene Wigner, this strange reaction between the observer and the observed object has occurred "upon the entering of impressions into the consciousness."

The "classical" observations have been compared to looking through an underwater port of heavy plate glass at the underwater marine life. The quantum